



PDC

OCTOBER 1940

LEGIONNAIRE'S WOMAN

*Headline Story Behind a
Camp-Follower Whose Passion
Sparked a Desert Massacre*

Oct.
25¢

MAN'S CONQUEST

WHITE LOVE-SLAVE OF SAMOA:

**An Ex G.I.'s Savage
Ordeal With The
TABU-GIRLS of
"DEAD END ISLAND"**

**MAN-BAIT
FOR THE
DEVIL
SNAKE!**

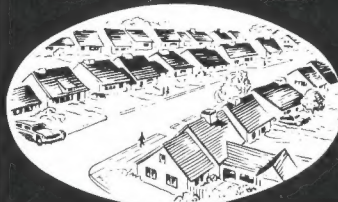
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SAGA OF WORLD WAR ONE—**

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OF THE HUMAN
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U.S. Dept. of Commerce says—
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Arlis Wilson of Tulsa says: "As a Duraclean Dealer I have the ideal setup. I am operating my own business, yet have at my disposal a staff of experienced men at Headquarters who will help me on a moment's notice."

We Help Build Your Business

YOUR personal success is of the utmost importance to Headquarters, for as you grow so grows the Duraclean Dealer organization. Thus, your initial training is only the beginning of a continuous assistance program designed to build your business. When you contact Hdqtrs. you receive prompt, expert counsel from a staff of specialists. Some of the over 27 services you receive are conventions and regional conferences, new product development, trademark protection, sales letters, tested ads, local promotional materials, a monthly sales-building magazine, plus a host of others.

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What Dealers Say

W. Lookiebill (St. Louis):
My 28th year! Began during depression and built business on good service.



D. Chilcott (N. Platte): Duraclean say gross \$9.00 per hour. I gross up to \$12.00. Many dealers do much better.



M. Lyons (Chgo): 3rd year should hit \$100,000; 2nd was \$60,000; 1st \$40,000. Hdqrs help make it possible.



E. Roddey (Hampton, Va.): Did \$600.00 first 12 days in January. My business keeps growing each month.

Start Part-Time If Employed

Even if you are now employed, you may start enjoying the financial independence of your OWN business. Many dealers start part-time, and as they expand their operation beyond what they can service on a sparetime basis, they switch to full-time. Later they expand further by hiring servicemen. This could be your pattern for success.

You will receive local training with an established dealer and at our 5-day, 50-hour factory training school. Thus, under our guidance, you become an expert in the care of rugs and upholstery, a profession for which there is now great demand.

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MAN'S CONQUEST

COVER STORY: "Tex" Renshaw and Doug Bairn weren't looking for trouble when they poled their raft up Burma's Chindwin River early last year. The two ex-GIs were after a modest fortune in kangsu wood, a rare tropical cedar, highly prized as coffin wood by thousands of Asiatics whose former source, Red China, had cut off their supply. Renshaw and Bairn got their precious cargo, all right—and more. For one of their kangsu "logs" turned out to be the murderous king-size killer called the Regal Python. Turn to page 18 for **DEVIL SNAKES DIE HARD**, the eyewitness story of the night 30 feet of coiled death turned a fortune in lumber into a floating coffin!

THE EDITOR

October, 1959

Vol. 5, No. 3

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CONFIDENTIALS

MOTOR TALK

If the car you own or intend to buy is one of THOSE LITTLE FOREIGN JOBS with a right-hand drive, don't let your hound ride with you. It scares the hell out of the other guy when he sees a dog where a human oughtta' be . . . Army statisticians have been rocked by final figures on vehicular injuries and deaths during Korean War. The tally--MORE MEN LOST IN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENTS IN KOREA THAN IN ENEMY ACTION. ALSO,



crash victims were generally more seriously injured, required longer hospitalization than battle casualties . . . Sign placed at the exit from Air National Guard Station near Lambert-St. Louis Airport! "YOU ARE NOW ENTERING A DANGER ZONE--THE PUBLIC HIGHWAY--GOOD LUCK! . . . You GUYS WHO REMOVE THERMOSTATS FROM COOLING SYSTEMS DURING SUMMER MONTHS are barking up the wrong tree. A cooler engine does not necessarily run better. Engines heated to between 160 degrees and 180 degrees F. will wear a lot less quickly, have more power and burn less gas than the same engines forced to run below 160 degrees . . . Despite auto owners' gripes to the contrary, LIFE OF THE AVERAGE CAR HAS DOUBLED SINCE 1925, when most vehicles were scrapped at age 6.5 years. Today's cars don't end up on the junk pile 'til they're 12 years old . . . VOLKSWAGEN people are so satisfied with sales around the world that they're not even thinking of any style changes for at least a few more years . . . YOUR CAR WILL LAST LONGER if you take it out on the highway once a week, open her up within the speed limits, and blow out some of that gum and carbon that accumulates during short hauls and low speeds. Sometimes will do as much for a car as a tune-up . . . DON'T BLAME THE AUTO OR THE WEATHER IF YOU HAVE A CRACK-UP. Over 95% of the cars involved in accidents are in apparently good condition. More than 85% of fatal accidents

occur during clear weather, 79.6% on dry roads . . . Don't expect too radical a change in those AMERICAN-MADE ECONOMY CARS due this fall. Shorter wheel bases, yes, and also less chrome, more gas mileage, lower costs, than regular model lines. But they still won't approach foreign makes in all these departments . . .

GI LOW DOWN

RANGER OUTFITS BLASTING WEST GERMAN ARMY for initiating the latest "living off land" gimmick, which includes a diet of boiled crow. U. S. counterparts are doing the Jerries one better--are teaching commando groups the finer art of preparing lizards. Most trainees swear they'd rather starve to death . . . Some dynamiters specializing in SELLING INSURANCE TO ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL are using letterheads which suggest they represent a government agency. If you get one don't bite until you've fully investigated. Plenty of legit companies looking to do business with you--and the deal they offer is usually better and cheaper . . . BRASS IS CRACKING DOWN BUT GOOD ON GI'S PEDDLING A PINT OF THEIR BLOOD when the broke days roll around



just before paycall. Many of the lads are collapsing during training, and pilots have been cracking up jets after passing out at high altitudes . . . UPPER ECHELON TALK THAT ARMED FORCES ARE DISCARDING WW II WEAPONS IS JUST SO MUCH HOOEY. At present rate of replacement, the war that can come in the next decade will still see a majority of ground forces using M-1's and the same old submachine guns . . .

ROD AND RIFLE

BLUEGILLS, ESPECIALLY THE BIG ONES NOT BITING? Reason may be your time table's off. They lay low during the day, rise

(Continued on page 39)



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MAN'S CONQUEST

Letters to the Editor

30-GIRL CRASHOUT



"Read 'Captain Parry's 30-Girl Crashout' in your September issue and have only one comment: that group of Rangers was lucky—*damn lucky*. To raid a Nazi truck convoy one month before D-Day, rescue 30 French girls, get them all safely back to Omaha beach for evacuation to England, with only three casualties—that's not just luck, that's a *miracle!*"

R. F.
Columbia, S. C.

Capt. James R. Parry's 20-man Ranger team wasn't that fortunate in their famous Normandy raid on May 1, 1944. True, they achieved their objective and rescued Marie Boudet, French underground agent, but at a cost of five dead, not three, and four wounded. A 40% casualty rate can hardly be called "lucky."—The Editor

"... couldn't help writing you after reading about Andre Montaigne, the French underground leader who guided Capt. Parry and his Rangers on their incredible raid. Did you know that after the war the famed *maquis* became a leading spirit in the DeGaullist movement? When war broke out in French Indochina in 1953, Montaigne abandoned his political career to join Gen. Jacques Massu's crack paratroop division as a major. He was killed in the heroic defense of Dienbienphu."

H. T.
New York, N. Y.

"Capt. Parry's Ranger raid on Normandy a month before the invasion sounds like a typical 'special unit' operation to me—that is, 'situation normal—all fouled up.' Poor planning, inaccurate intelligence, faulty liaison with badly

organized resistance groups . . . these foul-ups cost lives in every one of those highly publicized commando operations . . . It's fortunate that Jim Parry and his men were tough, resourceful soldiers who could fight their way out of a hopeless mess that should never have been allowed to happen."

D. G.
Muskogee, Okla.

BLACK BART

"Congratulations on Joe Chamberlain's excellent piece on California's famed road agent and poetical stage robber, Black Bart (*September THE INCREDIBLE WALKING GUN*). They used to call him Wells Fargo's 'silent partner' since he specialized in holding up their stages when they came down the mountain roads from the Sierra Nevada Mother Lode country loaded with thousands in gold dust and bullion . . ."

F. W.
Stockton, Calif.

"Charlie Boles, the stage robber who signed his poetical 'receipts' Black Bart . . . was killed in the Mexican Revolution in 1912. My uncle knew him well in the city of Saltillo, where he'd lived for a number of years after his release from prison in 1891."

C. G.
Globe, Ariz.

"Black Bart didn't disappear after his release . . . as your writer says . . . His wife came out from Missouri to join him and he lived in quiet retirement in Marysville, Calif., until he died . . . sometime during World War I."

L. J.
Redding, Calif.

As Joseph Henry Jackson points out in his definitive biography, there has never been any agreement concerning the last years and death of Charles Boles, alias Black Bart.—The Editor

OPERATION CASANOVA

"I've been reading **MAN'S CONQUEST** a long time now . . . and I can't remember a better story than 'The Amazing Mission of Andrew Quade' (*September*). Any guy who can handle two jealous harems and a detachment of Jap soldiers is my idea of a real man. But what I liked was that he wasn't a special combat-trained Marine or commando or

raider or what have you—but a plain old merchant seaman!

"P.S. I'm a plain old merchant seaman too!"

D. L.
Mobile, Ala.

"Whatever became of that Aussie seaman, Andrew Quade. Did he ever get decorated or recognized in any way for his 'peculiar' contribution to the war? After all, a guy who uses his extraordinary talent with women to smash a Jap artillery outfit deserves something more than just thanks and a new uniform."

R. H.
Jackson, Tenn.

Apparently Seaman Quade wanted nothing and was completely indifferent to his vital role in smashing the Japanese artillery positions on Luka Island, in the Sulu Archipelago off the southern Philippines. After he was flown to Port Darwin, Australia by the U.S. Army early in 1942, Quade again shipped out on a New Zealand freighter as an ordinary seaman. There his trail ends. Andrew Quade has never been heard from since that day.—The Editor.

GIRL-OF-THE-MONTH



"You're right! Not since Anita Ekberg has anything come along to match your Girl-of-the-Month, Lillian Madsen. No wonder they voted her Miss Denmark. She's the Greatest Dane since Hamlet."

A. V.
Beckley, W. Va.

With her looks and figure, she shouldn't have any of his problems, either.—The Editor.



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MORRELL'S MADNESS

by JOE CHAMBERLAIN



French newspapers hailed Edmond Morrell as "AWOL Hero of Legion."

They saw Legionnaire Morrell wander off into the cruel Sahara, still mumbling love-talk to the hot-blooded woman who was no longer at his side. Then, back at the fort, they found only the dead—and this incredible story that told them why.

■ IT was Monday, October 15, 1956. Legionnaire Edmond Morrell touched his throat. His head was still on his neck, his wallet and change were lying on the pile of clothes heaped in a corner of the filthy Arab stall in the Medina. The stench of the place gagged him and he slowly, falteringly lifted his head up. Pain boiled behind his eyeballs from cheap wine and a fifty franc woman. When she came in, he studied her and felt worse. Nalaga was nude. She carried a bowl of water.

"Hello, Morrell," the Arab girl smiled.

"Hello, yourself." He shook his head disconsolately. "How long have I been here?"

"Four days. Lie down on the couch before you fall over, *habibi*."

"Don't you *habibi* me, you slut!" Morrell growled.

Seeing her thus, it surprised Legionnaire Morrell that he felt no greater flush of anger. Her deep, mellifluous

MORE



MORRELL'S MADNESS



Fanatical Berber nationalists met fierce resistance from outnumbered Legionnaires when they stormed fort at Miru-el-Rakin. But in end, only Morrell, in "hole" for desertion, escaped to warn other French outposts of Arab uprising.

voice surprised him, for in all his recollections of Nalaga the voice had never entirely seemed feminine to him. Nude, she had the body of a mature Arab—full, rising breasts that seemed far too young for her age.

"Well, I really went and did it this time, you old tramp," Morrell said disgustedly. "They'll hang me." "You're bitter?"

"I'm bitter as hell!" Morrell grumbled. "Where's my uniform?"

The girl curled her long arms around Morrell's neck and slowly, passionately pulled him down to the couch.

"I've got an outfit to get back to!" Morrell said melodramatically. "Clear off, you slut!"

"You're back with *me* now," she said, softly, washing his face. Then she shaved him. When she carried away the bowl, Morrell jumped up to leave, but the girl was back in an instant, pressing him back down: "You're outfit will keep, Morrell."

His head was clear when he awoke the *next* morning before dawn. They lay on the couch together and Morrell picked his brains trying to find the appropriate words, but always his thoughts of the Arab girl were so bitter he kept the talk to a minimum.

"I'll leave at daybreak. What day is it, Nalaga?"

"Tuesday. Four days since you came here. Two weeks since your furlough began," she kissed his face. He shoved her aside and she lay there, neither reproachful nor really hurt, but just looking at him as she did when he became the French enigma. "As you wish it, *habibi*."

"Wonder what the Rebels did since I left the fort?"

"Wiped the fort out," she said evenly. "Or will . . ."

"That'll be the day!" Morrell snorted.

"What," she touched his arm, "will they do to you?"

"What they do to AWOLs? The hole. Dungeon."

"They have no poetry, those sergeants."

"In every army," Morrell shrugged, "it's the same."

"You've got a long way to go. Maybe you should dress now?"

"Two hundred and fifty kilometers!" he shuddered.

"And how the hell do I get there—fly?"

"Let me worry about that, *habibi*. There's the jeep."

"Don't bother," he said dryly. He sat with his hands cupping his head. He moaned, "Oh, those poor bastards! I *knew* the FLN was going to hit 'em and I drunked out—"

"They know by now, *habibi*," the girl said evenly. "Dress, Morrell! I'll get the jeep!"

He looked around the hovel, found a cigarette and somehow mustered the strength to slip into his uniform. Then, later, she came back with a French jeep. He asked no questions and the Arab girl offered no information. Since this was Berber country, she made Morrell slip a burnoose over his uniform before driving. In the evening when it chilled over the desert, she accepted his jacket.

They drove up to the fort at Miru-el-Rakin the same night, much later, and he went in and found Sergeant Georges Rondeau.

"Put me in the hole, Rondeau. But don't hurt the girl."

"What I do doesn't matter," Rondeau snarled. "What the Lieutenant does is something else again, idiot! Have you heard what happened since you deserted?"

"I didn't desert."

"Call it what you will, fool! Do you *know* what happened?"

"Oui."

"Well, they attacked! The bastard pigs attacked!" Rondeau snarled. "And they'll come back for more. What good will you do me sitting in the hole?"

"That's for you to decide," Morrell grinned. "Anyway, I volunteer—"

"You'd better get in the hole. When the Lieutenant comes, it'll soften the blow—"

He looked around. The girl was no longer there.

"You know Arabs," Morrell laughed softly as he turned away. "Steal away in the night."

The big Sergeant stared after him disconsolately. Then he turned on his heel and walked across the dark quadrangle of the courtyard. In the night somewhere a long shrill whistle sounded. The Sergeant listened, then

climbed up on the battlements for a last long look.

There was nothing special about Edmond Morrell. He was blessed with a normal physical equipment; the normal grasp of rifles, machines guns, mortars and grenades; a reasonable comprehension of fundamental mathematics; basic engineering principles, like remembering to put anti-freeze in his motor the year after he had a cracked block, and so on. Edmond Morrell signed into the Legion with no bright-eyed misconception of the duty, the honor of being a Legionnaire, or the life expectancy, which was negligible, considering any of a dozen outposts in the rebel Melousa District, to which he was quite likely to be assigned.

Edmond Morrell, the civilian, was a nice enough guy. Had he stayed in Montreal wearing that single-breasted suit and making those daily runs up and down St. Catherine Street, there was no telling where he might've ended up. However, he didn't stay in Montreal—nor any other spot for very long—until he hit Algeria. Morrell did what a lot of guys would've done in similar circumstances, given a fistful of American dollars and their freedom in countries where a single American dollar could hire a man a harem, or could allow him to roll his own by dealing with some of the nomadic desert tribes who had price tags for everything.

From contraband *muchachas* to mass murder, the great American buck, depressed as it was, still got the job done.

Edmond Morrell, civilian, had a ball in his random travels in Asia and subsequently North Africa. But it was in the Medina at Casablanca that the ball exploded in Edmond's face. Doing the rounds in the slop joints within the walled Arab community, the man who had a passable knowledge of many odds and ends found, to his dismay, that he actually had a gaping blind spot where it concerned women. There wasn't much more to it than that. A belly dancer ground her perfumed bump skirt in Edmond's manly, handsome face one sultry night in the spring of '54, and Edmund boy suddenly saw Roman candles.

What the Canadian had left in his wallet, he slowly, surely distributed in the Medina dive where his girl, Nalaga, danced. For an old Sergeant Major, Canadian tank corps, to pull his cork over the first three-quarters naked broad—even if she could dance like Salome, was startling to Edmond Morrell himself, most of all.

In Algeria there were strip joints going in '54 that made even the *real old* Minsky's look like the Anvil Chorus. Morrell probably knew he was being had, but he was firmly and fatally in the clutches of one of the greatest imponderables since the Neanderthal Man. Edmond Morrell was in love. And he was damned near broke. He was also damned near crazy with jealousy when it developed that Nalaga picked up pin money bedding down with a random sailor or Legionnaire who had the price.

"It's different with them, *habibi*," she would say. "Beloved, I would never sleep with another man than you, were it not for the terrible need for money for the Rebel cause. With money our people can be free of French oppression some day. I contribute mine, *habibi*, all that I make and can spare—"

"That's a hell of a call," the civilian Morrell shook his head incredulously. "I love a patriotic hustler!"

"Say what you will if it makes you feel better—"

"It makes me feel lousy, lousy. Dirty and lousy."

"I feel clean," Nalaga's eyes were sad. "My cousin fights the French wherever the Tricolor flies. He is a member of the Hadj Messali, the *menharists*—mechanists. It takes much money to buy 20 millimeter guns, bazookas, half tracks—"

"What the hell do you know about 20's, bazookas and half tracks?"

"Only what I hear from my cousin, the *menharist* leader," the girl replied. "In the old days the only fighters were the *fellagh* and the *gourmier*. The *gourmier* fight with obsolete weapons and most of them are Kabyle Berbers; the *fellagh* are crazy, extremist fellows. They'd kill their own brother on suspicion of fraternizing with the European. They kill, I often think, for the sheer love of it."

Morrell grinned. "I understand, *habibi*. I read you," he repeated. "*Gourmier*—old school fighters. Damascus barrels. Classic charge the bloody fort and ram down the gate. *Menharist*—mechanized troops, fighting modern ways. *Fellagh*—oddballs, cutthroats, the Stern gang in burnoose, nationalist fanatics. How's that?"

"I read you," the Arab girl laughed and clutched his hand. "You need money, lover?"

"I won't starve!"

They were sitting cross-legged in an Arab *dingo* in the Medina quarter of Casablanca. A bottle of sweet-and-pungent rotgut lay between them. They talked softly. The girl glanced cautiously about.

"You work for Algerian Nationalism?"

Morrell shook his gloomy, good looking head. "No can do, Nalaga. My

(Continued on page 42)



Nalaga, Morrell's bellydancer mistress, used her erotic bump and grind routine as come-on for war-weary Legionnaires on furlough in Casablanca.

RIDE of the NAKED WARRIORS

by ERIC GREYWOOD

EDITOR'S NOTE: Forty years before the age of guided missiles, two young Italian officers built a "secret weapon"—a manned torpedo—that was to revolutionize naval warfare. Here is the saga of the world's first frogmen.

■ WHEN Torpedo boat 167 of the Royal Italian Navy pulled up alongside the dock at the Venice navy yard on the morning of October 31, 1918, two mysterious passengers and a curious cargo were waiting for it.

Hardly had the crew gotten lines over the sides when the two strangers in filthy coveralls and the fancy caps of *Regia Nautica* officers tossed their outsize duffel-bags onto the deck and leaped aboard. As soon as they hit the deck and saluted the bridge and the officer of the deck, who joined them, they turned and looked up apprehensively at the dockside crane which was beginning to swing a strange cargo onto the vessel. At the end of the twin cables hung a monstrous hunk of hardware that looked something like an exploded cigar. Three-quarters of its 30-foot length was trim as a panatela, but the front end was stumpy and disjointed and was hung with red warning flags and tatters of greasy burlap. A sailor jumped onto the dock and took a position from which he had a clear view of both the crane operator and the officers on the boat.

As the torpedo-like object was lowered quickly toward the deck on hand-signals relayed by the sailor, the taller of the two strangers shot his hand up and bellowed, "*Piano! Piano! Slowly!*" The relay-man whirled toward the crane operator, putting both hands down like an umpire giving the Safe! signal, and screamed: "*Take it easy!*"

The deck officer shouted an order and sailors

MORE



Twelve days before the end
Austria's "impregnable" Pola



of WW I, two Italian navy officers guided a homemade torpedo into Harbor—and in one blinding flash, changed naval warfare forever.

RIDE OF THE NAKED WARRIORS

who'd been standing around gawking swarmed over to the starboard side of the after-deck. The cables screeched at the strain of low gear, and as the object neared the deck the sailors reached up, grabbed it and babied it down. Then the two strangers walked over and supervised the lashing of the grim hardware to the pad-eyes, bits, and cleats, and made sure there was no danger of it working loose.

Minutes later the torpedo boat charged off at full speed and headed out the harbor mouth toward the open sea.

The deck officer led the two strangers up onto the bridge to meet the lieutenant commanding the vessel.

"Captain Rossetti, of Test and Development," the ensign said, introducing the taller of the two men. "And Lieutenant Paolucci—MAS."

MAS was the nickname the Italians gave their PT boats, the speedy mosquito fleet they depended on for quick strikes and surprise attacks. The initials stood for the patriot D'Annunzio's motto: *Memento Audare Semper*, meaning "Always remember to dare." There were plenty of times during World War I when daring was all the Italians could do as they buzzed in to try to launch their torpedoes and got shot out of the water by the superior German and Austrian fleets. It was the most glamorous branch of the service—and the most deadly.

"Glad to meet you, gentlemen," the skipper said, unable to repress a smile. "Now perhaps you can tell me just what that—that 'thing' is we took aboard."

Raffaele Rossetti laughed. "I don't wonder you're baffled. It's our new secret weapon—a manned torpedo.



His lungs bursting for air, Rossetti broke surface after exploring the hull of the *Viribus Unitis* for a likely place to attach the 400 pounds of TNT.

Kind of awkward, but Paolucci and I are convinced it'll do the trick."

"And what," the skipper asked, "is the trick?"

Rossetti looked around, out of long habit. The secrets he carried in his brain as a member of Test and Development were constantly with him, and whenever he spoke he spoke guardedly, and very slowly. Such men don't even trust themselves, fearing they'll blurt out some piece of information they're not supposed to. Some 20 men knew *all* the secrets Rossetti knew, but not *one* individual was privy to more than a twentieth share of this knowledge.

"I always expect someone to be eavesdropping," Rossetti said with a grin as he looked back at the skipper. Now they were at sea, and there was no longer any need to worry that someone's careless talk might upset his long-nurtured plans.

"We're going to ride this torpedo into Pola and sink one of the Austrian capital ships—the *Viribus Unitis*, maybe, or the *Prinz Eugen*."

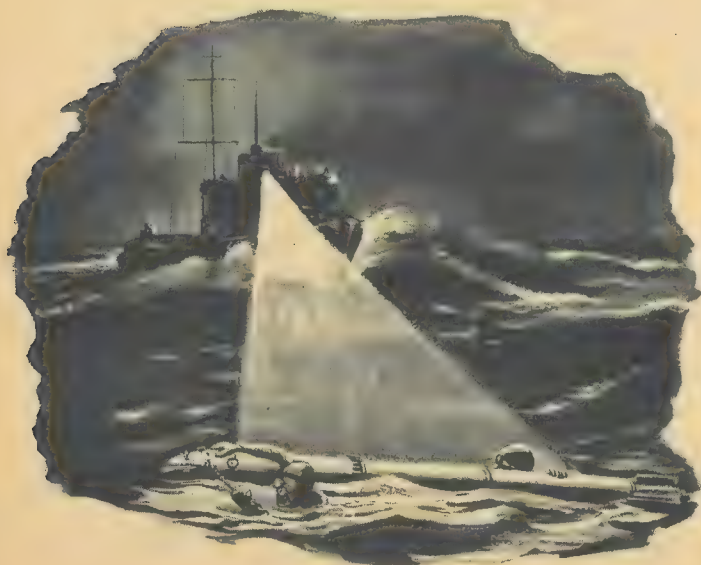
The skipper gaped at him. Pola Harbor was the base of the Austrian fleet, patrolled day and night by fast destroyers, and protected by floating booms, mined moles and breakwaters, anti-submarine nets, swarms of floating contact mines, and bristling with shore guns of every description. It was as if Rossetti had announced he was going into Germany to spike the Big Bertha, or capture the Kaiser.

"That's—that's impossible!" the skipper gasped.

Rossetti just smiled. He'd been hearing the same thing ever since he broached this plan to the top brass.

"We'll do it, all right," said Paolucci confidently.

Under a lowering, leaden sky they raced southeast—across the Adriatic Sea on their desperate mission, and the secret weapon strained at its ropes as wave-tops and scud buffeted it. The sleek end of the weapon was a captured German torpedo, and the lumpy, misshaped head consisted of two separate and detachable metal barrels loaded with TNT. The torpedo contained a twin-screw motor driven by a huge tube of air compressed to exert a pressure of almost 4,000 pounds per



square inch, and capable of a three hour run at slow speed. It normally ran on the surface of the water, but by manipulation of diving planes it could be submerged to a depth of six feet.

In those days there were no electronic brains or radio impulses to produce a thinking missile or remotely control a launched one, and the only way to be absolutely sure the torpedo reached its target, Rossetti reckoned, was to deliver it personally. The deadly part, of course, lay in the two-section warhead. Each of these metal barrels contained 400 pounds of explosive, was fitted with a clockwork mechanism, time-firing gadgets, and gear to latch the warhead to the warship selected as the target.

That would be the last item on the agenda—if Rossetti and Paolucci could make it through what everybody but themselves considered insurmountable obstacles. For months they had trained for this job, wrestling a ton-and-a-half facsimile of the torpedo around in the water and swimming and diving with great weights. Always they wore rubber suits of Rossetti's invention, cumbersome gear that shipped water at the neck but were the best outfits available at the time.

Rossetti and Paolucci were, after all, the first of the frogmen, years ahead of their time, and they had to make do with what they could improvise or dream up.

When the torpedo boat drew near the spot off Brioni Island, Yugoslavia, where they were to rendezvous with an MAS, the two frogmen went below to get into their rubber suits. By the time they came topside the MAS was tying up to No. 167, and the torpedo boat's sailors were lifting the torpedo on the boom. All hands worked cautiously, dry-mouthed with the realization that a slip would blow them all to kingdom come. At last, with a concerted sigh of relief, they made the transfer successfully, and the MAS yawed and listed under the weight.

Rossetti went up to the bridge to thank the skipper of the torpedo boat and found him on the wing, looking down at the secret weapon. "What was it the poet Bruno said?" he muttered with a nod toward the torpedo. "*'Se non e vero e molto ben trovato.'*" *If it's not true, at least it's very well invented.* He shook his head slowly. "I still don't believe the crazy thing is true, and after you've gone I'll think I've dreamed it all." He shook hands with Rossetti who leaped lightly down the ladder and then onto the MAS. A moment later they were lost in a shower of spray as they sped off on a long reconnaissance of the coastline from a safe distance. Then they have to just over the horizon from the enemy naval base, slid the torpedo into the water and checked and rechecked the timers, detonators, and the engine as they waited for darkness.

So intent were the MAS crew and the two frogmen on their operation that they failed for a long time to see an enemy destroyer headed their way. She was moving fast, with sparks of fire flashing in the thick plume of coal-smoke from her triple stacks, and when they did become aware of her the men were sure they'd been spotted.

But the miserable weather and the gathering dusk were with them, for just as a sighting seemed inevitable the destroyer changed course, speeding east with the bit in her teeth.

"Must have gotten a reading on the asdic," Paolucci said, "and started hunting one of our subs. If they did, I pray to God they don't find it."

When night came the MAS moved toward Pola Harbor slowly, towing the torpedo. In the distance searchlights on the shore flicked on from time to time

to scan the waters outside the harbor entrance, and then blacked out. Hours went by as the heavily burdened boat fought a rising wind that whipped out of the east. A stinging rain swept over the men on deck. At last, having come as close to shore as they dared under the circumstances, the MAS skipper cut the engines. He'd raced in closer than this plenty of times, but right now there was more to it than just zigzagging and running if he were detected; now discovery would mean the death of a desperate operation which was months in the planning.

To the crew of the MAS death seemed the inevitable outcome of the adventure anyway. They knew the hazardous approaches to the naval base, and they knew they were nothing compared to the dangers of the inner defenses which the frogmen were going to attempt to breach. It took all their restraint to say *arrivederci* instead of good-bye as Rossetti and Paolucci slipped over the side of the MAS and clung to their torpedo.

In the water the two men found the rough Adriatic



a different proposition from the calm Venice lagoons where they'd trained with a mock torpedo. Rossetti triggered the release of the air-tube and the propellers started churning. He and his mate tried straddling the torpedo, but this put them at a height where the wind-driven spray of the choppy sea smacked them full force and sent water rushing down the necks of their rubber suits. They tightened the draw-strings to pinch the suits tighter, but they quickly loosened them and slipped off the torpedo as they found getting wet preferable to strangling.

"Whew!" Paolucci groaned, "I couldn't have taken that much longer."

Rossetti started to reply but caught a mouthful of water and spat, and decided that these conditions weren't ones for idle chit-chat.

Gradually the black silhouettes of objects began to take shape against the deep gray of the night as their eyes became accustomed to the murk. The jagged rocks of the breakwater loomed up as a recognizable shape, and Rossetti altered course to bypass them. For months they'd studied charts and clay mock-ups of the base, and they could make out (Continued on page 51)



Devil Snakes Die Hard

The two ex-GIs had it made—float the priceless kangsu burial wood downriver and they could sell it for \$100,000. But when 30 feet of coiled death dropped aboard, the fortune in lumber almost became their own coffins.



by RALPH "TEX" RENSHAW

■ LET'S face it, the hardest thing to do is—nothing at all. That's what I was trying to do sitting there beside Doug, just after sundown. Tomorrow we would reach Monywa, on the Chindwin River in upper Burma. Doug cradled the shotgun in his arms and I had the cane knife. Sitting on our hunkers with only wet logs for comfort, we were listening for the approach of our visitor. It was important that we find him as soon as he found us—if we wanted to live to see another dawn.

"Hear anything?" Doug whispered.

I shook my head. On the pile of camp gear beside Doug, our only light, an open-flame oil lamp, flickered its yellow rays around the mipa-palm shack in which we sat at the stern of our raft. Rainbirds croaked in the

jungle on both sides of the river. Neither of us moved a muscle as the raft glided along in the oily smooth water just as it had been doing all week. But we knew tonight was different—because of the visitor aboard.

He hadn't been invited—but he was there. Nobody knew when he arrived. Half an hour ago when daylight began fading Ahmin discovered him. Now Ahmin was a couple of miles back up-river, hoping to make a raft of his own and catch up with us in the next couple of days. We'd hated to see him go, but the departure was not entirely his idea. Our visitor had attacked the dog first, then he'd smacked Ahmin with his blunt snout. Ahmin and the dog went overboard in a big splash. That was after Ahmin had (Continued on page 44)





MISTRESS of the SUNDANCE KID

by W. D. LANSFORD

■ SITTING in Luchow's, New York's famous restaurant, seemed perfectly natural to the young man. He thought: *We were made for this, bucko—you and me!* He frequently thought about himself as two persons. It helped him talk over the good things and the things which worried him. It helped him stay alive.

He grinned impishly and leaned over the table for a glimpse of his new self in the fancy oval mirror opposite him. The dude he saw would have floored the cowboys back in the old Hole-in-the-Wall country, all right. Beside him, on the coat-rack hung a stiff, jaunty bowler and a natty Prince Albert overcoat complete with velvet collar. His thick, flaxen hair was plastered down and smelled of bay rum, as did his youthful, perpetually-smiling face. A stiff wing-collar encircled by a broad cravat lent an air to a conservative, pin-stripped suit, made even more resplendent by a heavy gold chain and charm stretched across its vest. His trousers were creased, in the latest style, to show they were store-bought, and his high-button shoes had bulbous toes that would have thrown the boys out West into a laughing fit, but which only drew the admiring glances of New York ladies.

One part of his immaculate attire the big city folks might have considered a mite odd was the perfectly matched, fully-loaded pair of six-shooters he wore under his loose-hanging coat. But being winter time, neither these, nor the derringer in the inside pocket of his Prince Albert were

(Continued on page 54)

When the two Wyoming killers landed in Argentina,
they hit the pampas like a bloody whirlwind.
But the gal with them was the fastest of the trio—
whether it was pitching hot lead or making love.

**WE LIKE
LOYA**





WHO wouldn't? Loya Raki, who hails from Germany, is one of the most exotic looking gals we've seen in a long while. Her grandmother was Javanese, hence that sultry look that drives the boys wild. And not just American guys either. Loya has starred in 15 European movies, posed for more than 200 magazine covers, and is known as Germany's Brigitte Bardot. And no wonder. She stands 5'4" and fills her

MORE



WE LIKE LOYA





37-20-37 form to perfection. Crazy about sunbathing, Loya never misses a chance to get away for weekends and take it easy at the beach. "Doesn't take me long to pack my bikini and a bottle of sun tan lotion.

The only trouble is—by the time I get a good, deep tan, the season's almost over." Another thing she likes about the summer-time is getting out on the road and traveling. Loya is a sports car fan (owns a fire-engine red MG) and thinks nothing

MORE



WE LIKE LOYA

of taking off somewhere for a three or four hour drive "just to get away from the city." At home, Loya's favorite lounging costume is skin-tight toreador pants and a skimpy halter. She likes entertaining in her own apartment where "I can relax, have a cocktail or two, listen to some nice, dreamy music—and be alone with my man." ●





"KILL, MAKE LOVE— and DIE!"



Anton Sardot, famed French resistance leader, complained directly to DeGaulle when Maria Kos was assigned to his special guerrilla team in Nazi-held Netherlands. But their first mission together—blowing up vital rail bridge across River Waal near Nijmegen, Holland—was most spectacular single underground raid of WW II.

by GENE CHANNING

■ MARIA Kos cupped her fingers around the watch, noted the hour and glared reprovingly at the handsome *maquis* lying beside her in the drainage ditch. The soft purling of the River Waal muffled the sound of her voice as she tugged, irritably, at his sleeve.

"Isn't it time yet? We have bangalore torpedoes to attach—"

Anton Sardot looked over the girl's smooth blonde head to the tip of the rise where railroad tracks veered around in a wide curve between two massive granite cliffs.

The German pillbox was sprawled out against the

"But murder is man's work!" Sardot protested when the first girl guerrillas joined the FFI. Until a one-woman army showed him different—in the big "lovers' raid" on the bridge over the River Waal.



France, 1941: Lone *maquis* fires over dead German sentry in FFI raid on Belfort. Sardot excelled in one-man operations like this.

Holland, 1944: Guerrilla leader blew his stack when enthusiastic *femmes de guerre* flocked to growing resistance movement.



low scrub hills to the west, on the other side of 200 yards of trestle that spanned the deep tidal waters of the Waal. Eight vaguely silhouetted Nazi guards patrolled the bridge along its narrow catwalks, four at either end, and in the big pillbox, the two *maquis* knew, were 88 others. Anton Sardot of the Dutch underground, guerrilla, random assassin of collaborators and Nazis, and general menace-about-Holland, wiped a sleeve across his sensitive nose and shrugged. It was, for Sardot, his first job with one of the new *femme de guerilla*, and a beautiful one at that, but Sardot wasn't entirely sure yet that he liked the companionship.

As he reached for the burlap sack containing six bangalore torpedoes, fused and ready for instant use,

the ubiquitous scourge of the German Occupation Force kissed the young lady full on her mouth.

"I'm nervous," Sardot grinned. "I'm accustomed to working alone."

"So am I," the girl looked at him, her blue eyes softening perceptibly. "Do it again."

Sardot kissed her deep and then started up.

"Be careful," Maria Kos clutched his trouser leg. "There are so many of the vermin up there."

"I'll do my job," the Frenchman smiled. "Just you remember to shoot that Browning for all you're worth, Maria!"

"I'm really a very good shot, Sardot."

"That's what they told me (Continued on page 38)

Return to DEAD-END ISLAND

by **THOMAS LANG**

When freelance writer Tom Lang sailed to Maniliki Island on Aug. 9, 1951, he was first white man since 1809 to enter infamous female prison.



■ CONSCIOUSNESS slowly returned and I knew fear—the deepest, strangest fear a man can experience: in a matter of minutes a woman was going to beat my head to a bloody pulp, and there wasn't a damned thing I could do about it!

The *taupo* was filled with women. Drunk on fermented coconut juice, *kava*, spittle added, they were calmly discussing ways and means of dispatching me. Calmly, too, they would stare at me as if the blood spurting from my mouth was an everyday sight in Maniliki.

My head pounded and my eyes refused to focus. I lay belly down, right cheek gummed to the reed matting by the bloody coagulation of an earlier torture. The heavy, intoxicating scent of perfume was from a bower of flame-red tropical flowers encircling my bare shoulders, for mine was to be a royal sendoff, and as such, I was dressed for the part.

The ceremonial death of a man on the island was a major event. The excited ladies of the atoll, wearing flowers, ceremonial paint and trinkets decorated with human teeth, laughed as unconcernedly as if they'd gathered for an afternoon tea party. Fear? What I felt was fear and revulsion, for
MORE

Before him, only one man had lived to tell about the hell-paradise isle of women. Truth or fiction? Tom Lang dared to find out for himself.





RETURN TO DEAD-END ISLAND

there were about two hundred of these lusty lucretias convened for my execution. And each, in turn, ironically, I'd known as a wife.

Worse yet, my demise was to be of my own making.

Nobody shipwrecked me; nobody twisted my arm to reach that fateful decision to come to Maniliki and drunkenly claim that Micronesian islanders were the only chosen people in the era of the atom.

According to the timetable of events on that emerald green island, the night of August 12, 1951 commemorated the rise of the moon which, in some parts of the world, still signifies a time of rapture of the soul . . . something like the Hindu's eighth stage of transmigration, when the body finally attains its most peaceful state in death. The lady who'd chosen that singular honor was my wide-hipped, big-bosomed mate, Lorasa.

Regicide was her business. As the hereditary queen of the island, the beautiful dark-skinned collector of human skulls, trinkets and dead men's tattoos, sensuous, satanic Lorasa in whose arms the passions of many a dreamer had been spent—this same queen Lorasa who now wore my wristwatch like a fraternity pin about her lovely neck was unalterably set on doing me in.

And why? Her every gesture, every love sound had led me to believe that here was one white tourist who'd live out a fantastic dream to the end. As my head cleared, I could see her black animated eyes moving along the line of women, rapily discussing my end.

The beginning? Seven days before, sitting in a joint called Three Fountains, in Tutuila, capital of the Cook group, I'd opened my big mouth to chortle derisively at the weird female paradise-in-reverse called Maniliki that Cob Toli Kouza, shipping manager of Samoan Lines and sometime fishing guide, described again over a big belt of whiskey. The more he talked, the more intrigued I became. A whole island of women—man-hating women? Even the first time I heard the legends about Maniliki, it sounded insane.

On the other hand, I couldn't forget the stories. And my friend knew it. He knew, too, that a guy who makes his living chasing down stories of the romantic islands, couldn't afford *not* to chase down a yarn like this.

"You'd laugh out of the other side of your mouth," Toli grinned, "if those babes got hold of you—"

"What a hell of a way to die!"

"That's right. And you'd die, Tom—*don't kid yourself about that!*"

"Sounds like a cave man's dream, Toli. Sounded like a cave man's dream the first time I heard it."

"Well," he slugged his highball. "There's plenty of babes around here. Some of them can tell some hair-raising stories, Tom."

"I'm more interested in your paradise lost."

"Forget it."

"Why? Try and imagine the commotion it'd make—big splash! A whole island of man-crazy gals for the taking—"

"You said it, boy," Toli grimaced. "For the taking and laying down of one's life!"

"You're getting to be a goddamned old lady."



"Lang, old kid, I like women as much as the next guy," my friend studied me. "But believe me, you couldn't get me near that passion pit for all the dough in Tonga!"

"Well," I said, pulling out my wallet and hoping he wouldn't be offended, "I don't know much about Tonga, but will this change your mind?" I laid out five crisp one hundred dollar bills. "And another five hundred when you get me back!"

"No dice."

"Under any condition?"

"Well, just one. You go ashore while I anchor offshore," Toli said thoughtfully. "Give you exactly seventy-two hours, which is more than reasonable, considering your stamina will give out long before that—"

"But why the time limit, Cob?"

"Buddy," Toli smiled grimly. "I live here; I also know myself. I figure I can hold 'em off with a rifle if they try swimming out to the boat—" He looked squarely at me and sighed. "But even a fat old rummy like me is human, Lang. I'm just as apt to swim ashore and see if I'm missing something as the next slob! Lang, I've got a wife and four kids—"

"Fair enough," I nodded. "When do we sail?"

"Tomorrow," Toli blessed himself. "After Church . . ."

Toli and I were long-standing friends, actually. I'd met him nine years before when my outfit shipped into Tonga en route to the war. It was there, while I was doing the bars, half crooked, half out of my mind seeing near nude women parading around the streets, that a short, affable Samoan called Toli took me in tow.

"Don't stare! It's rude!" he'd warned me.

"I'm only human for God's sake—" I protested. "Back home it's slightly different!"

"I guess so," he shrugged compassionately. "I suppose you'd *really* go crazy if you ever landed at Maniliki—"

"Where's that?"

"Offshore, a good run. An island of exiled women. Pretty bloody savage, though . . ." And Cob Toli explained. The way that Toli (and a few anthropologists)

told it, women offenders against the rigid island code were sentenced to Maniliki for a fantastic variety of sex sins. That is, by strict Samoan standards. A typical example would be the girl who, having spent a night with a lover, refuses to name the subject if he impregnates her; or on the other hand, names him against his wishes and therefore subjects him to embarrassment in the community. If a girl is raped (*meotetolo*) and refuses to name the boy for any reason, then she too had offended!

A girl who couldn't stand the excruciating punishment of the entire male community "taking tokens" on her wedding night, is also a sinner. Every able male regardless of age is invited to deflower the young bride, but if she whimpers, protests or otherwise "spoils" the celebration, she may be banished. She's usually stoned in addition to banishment.

Offenses ranging from protestations of maidenly virtue to excessive pleasure with one's husband's best friends and relations, are also punishable by sentences of from a month to six years.

And there's no such thing as "good behavior time."

In a nutshell, Toli shrugged, these were the kinds of sexual violations that constantly kept Maniliki island well stocked with the beautiful, sensuous, man-hating, man-killing girls of nearby islands. They ranged from 11 to about 40 years old. A self-governing community completely isolated from civilization, Maniliki's annual population was about 300 well-rounded women.

"And," he'd concluded that first time, "it's because of their lack of men—the root of their evil—that they will love a man to death if they ever catch one . . ."

Since 1809 when the first British shipwreck testified to the savagery of these voluptuous females, men have dreamed and lusted for "a visit to paradise . . ." How the hell the first shipwreck got away, though, remains a mystery. Others didn't fare as well, as their bones attested. All the way over from Tonga, a two-day sail, my old friend (the money helped the friendship along) filled me in on the history of Maniliki. And as I saw it, whether I lived or died, I had a great story. It was then August 9th, and I had 72 hours of paradise ahead.

We dropped anchor at the southwesterly reef. Cob Toli helped me into his tiny dinghy. It was hazy dusk and very quiet. The last I saw of Toli, he was sitting on the fantail with a rifle in his hands.

I hit the beach and began walking up a path to what probably was the town. I had no plan, no gun, no real defense in case of attack. Just a pack of cigarettes, a handful of silver coins (nickels and dimes) and my lighter. Then, no more than 50 yards inland, a sight that had stunned hundreds of men for nearly a century and a half, struck me.

Manilikans by the droves—nude, stark raving nude—swarmed out from the dusky fronds, their bodies adorned with brilliant circles of flowers. In an almost hysterical frenzy they rushed at me and I just stood there, too mute to mumble, too incredulous to try to get away. Like the winner of a college football game, I was hustled off my feet by hundreds of fingers and held straight up in the air, and carried that way into the *popui* some distance away.

I was no linguist, but I understood. I felt like a suckling pig being pinched for tenderness. Hands swarmed over me, ripping my clothes, the heavy smell of excitement wafting over me in that first few seconds of paradise. *Good Lord!* I groaned. *How long does this go on!* I felt like a virgin turned loose on a battlewagon. I felt naked, far more naked than these girls.

The goddamndest collection of thoughts raged in my

head. *Keep calm! Try to be suave, Lang—smile. You're supposed to be doing them a favor!* Then I was ushered into a large room and on the far mats I first saw Queen Lorasa.

Lorasa patted the mat. It was invitation and command at the same time. Giggling, grunting women ran up and a bowl of lotus water and coconut milk spiked with an aphrodisiac was set before me. Lorasa, smiling, her large breasts heaving excitedly, indicated the drink. I drank. Then by a system of signs and gestures, a younger woman indicated that I was to take off the balance of my clothing. I not only did that, but emptied my pockets and presented everything to the Queen. She permitted me to smoke, but kept the lighter. The nickels and dimes she threw to the rabble. There must have been more than 300 women in the village at the time, all of them gathered around Lorasa's bamboo and grass shack to see the man.

I had no choice but to comply, which I did, and I turned around and walked, as ordered. The door of the hut was filled with gawking women, pressing for a glimpse. Queen Lorasa smiled benignly and let her subjects, as it were, share the wealth. I paraded a good ten minutes while admiring ladies (some ladies!) playfully pinched me, admired me, praised me.

"For Christ's sake—take it easy!" I groaned. The little complaint just excited a new tide of enthusiastic giggles and testings. Now I was goddamned sorry I'd come. I could feel the cool liquid of the coconut juice settling in my limbs. My face felt flushed by something other than embarrassment. Queen Lorasa laughed huskily and patted the matting.

Aphrodisiac notwithstanding, I communicated my chagrin to the Queen. "*Get 'em the hell out first!*" I pleaded, waving my hands. Lorasa understood. Instantly her strong bronze hands slapped together and her arms lifted imperiously. The Queen's hutch was immediately empty of any female flesh other than her own . . .

Lorasa was broad-shouldered and broad-minded. Physically, she was quite young despite her "island-old" 30 years. After I did what I could to perpetuate the legend of male supremacy, (Continued on page 49)



Mask of

They called him "Sea Wolf," and half the navies of the world prowled the ocean, thirsting for his blood. Here is the thrilling saga of Count Felix Von Luckner, the master of deception who bared his fangs only when the time was right—and struck only to kill.



THE RAIDER

by WILLIAM DOUGLAS

ONE foggy morning in early 1916, a naval officer stood on the fighting bridge of a British blockade ship and watched the beginning of one of the great sea-sagas of our time. He did not know it, but history was moving toward him in the form of the saddest, most decrepit old tub he had ever set binoculars to.

But this was 1916—a crucial year in the war for supplies—and he was a link in the tight British blockade. It was his duty to keep a sharp eye out for contraband-runners, and especially for German surface raiders. He was taking no chances. "Number One," he said, calling his first officer without taking his glasses off the ship. "When she's within range, hail her to stand-to for inspection!"

"That wobbly, old scow, sir?"

"You have your orders, Number One!"

"Aye, sir!"

The first officer stepped out on the flying wing of the bridge, waiting to hail. The wary captain kept his post and watched the stranger approach, wondering, indeed, if his officer might be right—if he wasn't being just a trifle silly about the whole thing.

The ship which came toward him certainly was a pathetic sight. She was of untold age, a large, sprawling, square-rigger of the variety most often called windjammers. She lumbered on painfully, creaking in every joint and spar; her unwashed decks rolling and pitching, more than moving ahead, under the miserable spread of rotten sail she bore aloft. Her hull had not been painted for years and the ship looked as if the last rat had abandoned it even before the adaptation of steam-propulsion. Her bow bore the name *Pass of Balmaha* and she flew the neutral Norwegian flag. A moment later the British officer could distinguish a tall man in an old sou'wester, who stood by the helmsman on the poop-deck apparently attempting to calm a frightened woman. *The captain*, the officer thought to himself, *and the poor woman must be his wife*. For a moment he felt a sense of guilt, of having unintentionally caused the woman a bad fright. But he reminded himself that his duty demanded such measures.

Before the ship was quite within range, the captain of the windjammer had apparently succeeded in sending the woman below decks. Still from time to time, she could be seen, popping her head out of a hatch, her

MORE



Her "rotten" sails and dirty decks were the perfect cover for Count Luckner's *See-adler*, the deadliest Q-ship of World War I.

MASK OF THE RAIDER



To save torpedoes, sub surfaces near Q-ship to blast her out of the water with deck guns.



Acting out their roles, "panic

hands clasped together before her breast, her face turned skyward, as if in terror and prayer. At such times, the man in the black oiled-cloth cap, who now sucked peacefully at his pipe, would smile calmly, understandingly, and motion her below.

By the time the officer heard his Number-One's deep voice cutting the distance between ships, he felt he knew the quiet, easy-going people on the windjammer. He had been studying everything about them and, despite himself, could not fight down a feeling of profound anxiety for them. That their main cargo was lumber, he already knew—for he was trained to observe such things. The decks, and probably the entire hull, were stacked high with piles of it. But he also knew that the first heavy wind would rip out her rotten rigging, leaving captain, wife and ship, wallowing about helplessly. He tried not to think of that. He tried to remain impersonal—it wasn't his problem.

Ten minutes later the square-rigger was alongside, bobbing on the high North Atlantic waves like a cork. Her masts, almost bare as her crewmen took in sail, swayed dizzily overhead, causing the British captain's stomach to sway a little with them. He tried not to think about it as he leaned down from his bridge to call out. "Ahoy there—let's have the captain! Do any of you speak English?"

The man in the sou'wester cap stood below, grinning and smoking. "Ya! Ya, I am captain, mister! I speak

English goot!" He wiped a dirty hand over his mouth.

Taking a firm grip on his sense of duty and his stomach, the British officer forced himself to look over the wildly pitching decks, while his Number-One and several members of the crew went aboard the Norwegian vessel to inspect the captain's papers, crew and cargo.

When his men were all back top-side he called for a report.

"Lumber, sir! Ruddy lumber from stem to stern, 'tween-decks and above!"

"And her papers, Number One?"

"In order, sir! Norwegian and her destination is a neutral port!"

"Very well, Number One. Come aboard, please!" He watched his first officer shake hands, wishing the captain luck. A few moments later his man was aboard again, and the *Pass of Balmaha*—bearing the well-meant anxiety and good-will of the Royal Navy—wallowed away to begin one of the strangest, most exciting cruises in the history of war at sea. Before her cruise was over less than one year later, the passage of that decrepit, old windjammer through the blockade was to prove one of the most expensive mistakes the British navy ever made . . .

Perhaps the best description ever given of Count Felix Graf Von Luckner—better known to his enemies as the *Sea Devil*—was one which he uttered himself: "*Felix, by Joe! What kind of fellow are you? The fun you like*



party" abandons ship and swarms into the lifeboats.



Q-ship shows its fangs and blasts the submarine, sinking it in minutes.

Wearing their disguises and smiling jubilantly, Q-ship crewmen come ashore after completing successful cruise.



best is a practical joke!" At least that is where Mr. Lowell Thomas, the famous newscaster, tells us it came from. We are in a sense obligated to Mr. Thomas for most of what is known today of the elusive count. This much is self-apparent: the Sea Devil was certainly a *tricky* devil and a most paradoxical one—and he was destined to be forever remembered by those whose sea-lanes his devilish trail crossed. . . .

No sooner was the decrepit *Pass of Balmaha* out of

sight of the British warships than strange things began to happen to her. First, the devil waved a hand and her tattered, miserable canvas fell, while under the expert orders of a sharp-tongued bo'sun new (but purposely dirtied) sail went up to catch the full power of the North Atlantic wind. It could be seen, then, at a closer look, that her hull—far from being barnacled and rotted—was cleverly camouflaged to look it. She was old, and a windjammer, all right, but she was sound as any ship on the seas. Below her decks, (Please turn to page 69)

"KILL, MAKE LOVE AND DIE!"

(Continued from page 29)

back in Amsterdam. I'm counting on it."

The train hooted twice and Anton Sardot jumped up the rise and vanished among the black steel girders of the trestle. The nearest group of Nazis called out to the sentries on the other side of the bridge. Maria Kos sucked in her breath. Her small, firm breasts were plastered with sweat, and they clung to the coarse fabric of her fatigues from which, a moment later, she extracted her Rosary beads and holding them in her free hand, whispered a quick prayer.

Twenty-two and startlingly beautiful, Maria Kos, a young lady who'd never fired a shot before . . . pressed her cheek to the stock of the Browning automatic rifle and quickly swiveled the weapon toward the blockhouse. The train hooted once as it approached. Somewhere close a German coughed. The snout of a case-mated 280 millimeter gun suddenly pronged up through the low scudding clouds like a sinister accusation.

Maria Kos put the beads back in her fatigues. In two minutes or less, the train carrying troops, guns, and supplies for the new *Schwerpunkt* Division would roll across the River Waal—if Anton Sardot failed. The night was March 11, 1944, shortly before midnight.

At 0535 May 10, 1940 Germany executed her war plans by sending ten armored divisions (comprising the Fourth, Twelfth, Sixteenth and Panzergruppe Kleist Armies) across the borders of Belgium, Luxembourg and Holland. Surprise and concentration of troops were the Nazis' weapon. While Hitler's forces were actually inferior to the Allied armies, both in numbers and quality (4000 British Matildas as opposed to 2800 Nazi Mark III's, the former with superior 2-pounders to the German's 37-mm gun), the Panzer juggernaut of von Balck was too much for the Low Countries and they were soundly crushed in what amounted to an overnight victory.

France, shocked from its complacency too late, tried to stem the tide. Among those in her front ranks was young Anton Sardot, a captain in the cavalry who'd achieved a dubious fame as a *boulevardier*, *bon vivant* and the fiercest, dirtiest fighter in the *ecole militaire*. A graduate of the French West Point, Sardot, 30, son of a cabinet minister, fought the Boche in the best tradition and failing to get anywhere, fervently resolved not to be captured. It was one wish that Sardot couldn't control.

The Allied military leaders, especially the French, geared their defense to the linear tactics of World War I, splitting their armor among the military divisions. By dispersing their armor divisions along the entire border from the Swiss frontier to the English Channel, the French High Command played nicely into the Boche's hands and the Germans, literally, walked in and took over. No resistance was encountered in Luxembourg. In the Ardennes the combined opposition of French cavalry and Belgian *chasseurs*, availed nothing.

Unprepared for a massive mechanized thrust that was long-planned by the excellent German General Staff, a deployment

of Guderian's Panzer Corps in echelons 60 miles deep brushed aside the feeble resistance and by morning, 10 May, occupied the town of Sedan. Kleist sent a force of tanks across the Meuse (supported by the *Luftwaffe*) on 13 May, and by nightfall Hitler had his stranglehold on squirming France. So precise was German intelligence that the exact number of bunkers and guns and men along the entire French front was known. With the help of a Stuka attack, the French artillery was slaughtered and Chemery was occupied.

Von Brautitsch and von Rundstedt were somewhat thwarted on the beaches at Dunquerque, but the end of Allied struggle was nevertheless inevitable. On 7 June the German armor crossed the Aisne, annihilated pockets of French resistance and flanked Reims. France was finished.

"Sire," Murat told Napoleon in November 1806, "the fighting is over, because there are no combatants left."

So it was with the country of Sardot's birth. He was taken prisoner, along with 40,000 other northern sector Frenchmen and immediately made plans to escape. That first bit of chicanery on Alston Sardot's part clearly presaged the amazing events that were swiftly to follow, when he took up cudgels as the foremost guerrilla in the Netherlands.

On August 11, 1940, a clear, farm morning at Maubeuge, POW Sardot arose, kiddingly said goodbye to his prison mates and strode to the massive concrete headquarters of *Oberscharfuhrer* Rinehard Klaus, a demilitarized German tank major suffering from arthritis and a considerable case of megalomania. Klaus fancied himself a ladies' man. Several years before the War he'd visited the Pigalle and the *femme de plaisir* still romped across his brain, but being older now and without much rank (considering the plethora of brass fluttering about Paris since its occupation) the *Oberscharfuhrer* would've been delighted if a Frenchman who knew his way about might prove useful.

One of the rare deviations from Nazi military protocol took place that morning when Sardot, dying to please, and the German, dying to be pleased, discussed the possibility of a POW serving on the *Oberscharfuhrer's* personal staff. How this miracle was achieved isn't altogether known, but Anton Sardot pulled it off. Quite likely his pre-war reputation among career soldiers and the diplomatic corps helped. For, arriving at the headquarters building, he immediately impressed the prison staff with his pleasant manners and desires to "be of any assistance."

Overwhelmed by this untoward attitude on the part of a French POW, particularly an officer who'd fought in the bloodiest campaign of them all, the underlings of Richard Klaus quickly led the handsome Frenchman to the commandant's office. There, shrewdly laving his offer with *more* oil, Sardot repeated it verbatim. Klaus heard him out, but refused to commit himself.

Twenty-four hours later, the French POW was recalled to the commandant's headquarters. When the outer door was shut and the two men were alone, the commandant pointed to a closet and said, "There is a uniform inside. Put it on. Much will depend on how well you carry yourself as a German . . ."

Sardot concealed his delight and bowed obsequiously. Dressed, he was the impeccable personification of a young *lieutenant*

of the SS Corps. The commandant rubbed the palms of his hands together gleefully. Sardot's fluent German helped too.

"Sardot!" Klaus exclaimed. "You look marvelous! Now before we let our enthusiasm for this project run away with our logic, let me explain the—ah, facts of life."

"Yes, Herr Klaus?"

"First," the German smiled. "You will give me your word of honor as an officer and gentleman that you will not attempt to escape. Second, you will never make mention of our trips, either to your own fellow prisoners or to my men. Third, to insure my position I think it wise that you know certain facts."

"Yes, Herr Klaus?"

"The facts simply are," smiled the Nazi icily, "that your illustrious father and two sisters will be taken into custody and executed, should you break your word."

"You take no chances," Sardot smiled back. "Are there any other prohibitions, sir?"

"One," Klaus nodded. "You will make no attempt to communicate with your family or friends."

"*Je comprends.*"

"Allright. Take off the uniform and return to your barracks. When I can arrange for a few days leave, we shall make our little jaunt to Paris . . ."

The prisoner departed. Klaus was satisfied.

But satisfaction didn't come to Anton Sardot for a good three weeks. When it came, it almost floored him. Things weren't going quite as he'd anticipated. The Nazi, for all his 60 years, was a prodigious drinker and ladies' man. Sardot began to rue the agreement, but decided to play it out to the end. On September 3rd, at 12 Rue Druet, the apartment of a notorious Parisian madam whose ardor for the bed was exceeded only by her patriotism, the break came. The lady was a succulent, 30-year-old redhead. She slipped out of her bedroom long enough to whisper a few discouraging words to *Leutnant Sardot*, disgustingly reading a magazine in the living room.

"*Dieu! Il est formidable!*" the redhead groaned. "I am exhaust . . ."

"Do the best you can," Sardot shrugged.

Pulling her tight silk wrapper about her naked abundance the redhead, sighing tragically, tramped back with a fresh magnum of champagne. The Nazi belatedly elatedly and soon the sound of love making filled the best part of Anton Sardot's sanity. Reflecting dismally on his role in the affair Sardot, hating himself and seriously considering the possibility of breaking his word, prayed desperately for a small miracle. The onerous duty came to an end abruptly at daybreak when the nude redhead, smiling victoriously, emerged.

"*C'est fini, Sardot. Il est mort.*"

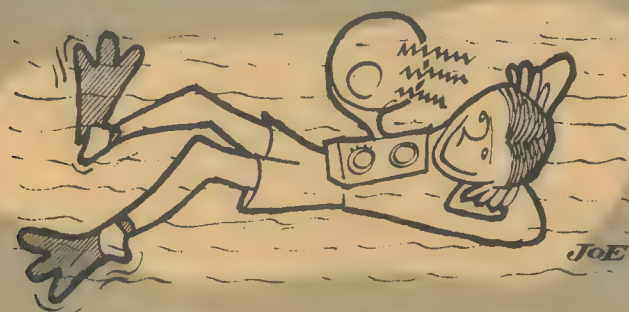
The Frenchman bolted into the bedroom to see for himself. Herr Klaus' pudgy, purple flesh was skimmed with sweat. His eyes were bugged out sightlessly. The *Oberscharfuhrer* was indeed very dead. The redhead stood beside him and let out a big sigh as Sardot pressed five thousand-franc notes in her hand.

"I don't want the money, *cheri*. I just want a bath . . ."

Of the innumerable Nazis to lose their lives in dealings with Anton Sardot, the Klaus episode was the one notable exception to a general rule of *violence*. Nobody ever did his dirty work for him

(Continued on page 40)

to the surface at night. Therefore, fish 'em deep in the daytime with large bait. Switch to surface bugs at sunset . . . Farmers across the country are slowly but surely WIPING OUT THE BEAVER CROP. They're stringing high-voltage shocking machines at beaver dam sites, dynamiting dams. In some sections, no young 'uns will be born this year, because mom and pop can't get together in their little nest . . . SKINDIVERS, amateurs and pros, now have available to them an underwater wireless communications system called the Aquavox. Range is one mile underwater



between swimmers, 200 feet from surface vessel to deep diver. Weighs seven pounds, is almost weightless under water . . . The SLINGSHOT was probably man's first weapon against beasts and other men . . . Fish are finicky. Hence, WHEN USING LURES OR ARTIFICIAL BAITS, vary the speed of your retrieve and the action of the lure. Some days fish want a fast-moving lure, on others a lazy one. Sometimes they hanker for and will bite a smooth mover, and the next it may be the jerky action that tempts them . . . At the close of the coming hunting season, some states will claim more than a million cottontail rabbits taken by hunters throughout the winter. Total will run to about 30 million . . .

MEDICAL MARCH

That old standby of the rejuvenation faddists--ROYAL JELLY--is crowding into a new field as a POSSIBLE CURE FOR CANCER. Canadian scientists report that it protects mice from four kinds of the deadly disease . . . A British doctor has reported that TV VIEWERS ARE DISPLAYING A SURPRISING UPSWING IN CORONARY DISEASES, says they are being triggered by emotional excitement on screen, which causes what he calls "television angina" . . . ARMY MEDICS ARE NOW PRESCRIBING PLASTIC EYES INSTEAD OF THE GLASS ONES FORMERLY USED. New plastic version is surgically attached to eye muscles, moves like a normal eye, hence wearers prefer them. Since they absorb light, they eliminate that glassy stare . . .

DOLLARS AND CENTS

BURNED AND BATTERED MONEY CAN BE REDEEMED by sending what remains, along with a feasible explanation of what happened to it, to the Treasury Department's Currency Redemption Division at 13th and D Streets, Washington, D. C. Even if bills are just ashes or a mass of water-soaked pulp, you can usually get a part of your loss. If experts reconstruct less than half a bill, they'll pay for that half . . . IF YOU'VE GOT A SQUEALER'S STREAK, you can join the hundreds of people every year who pick up extra cash informing on their relatives and friends suspected of evading income taxes. Last year the government paid out \$600,000 in bonuses to finger artists . . . UTAH RANKS HIGHEST AS LIKELY AREA FOR DISCOVERING URANIUM PAYLOADS . . . Unemployment may hit the next guy this coming winter, but not you if you're a skilled craftsman and willing to travel. New York, for example, and other industrial states are not training enough craftsmen to meet their needs of the next six years . . .

GROG AND GANGLAND

T-Men report a resurgence of BOOTLEG BOOZE is RESPONSIBLE FOR OVER 1,100 DEATHS RECORDED THIS YEAR SO FAR. In Chicago, a lethal brew appropriately named "Flame Thrower," will paralyze a man from the waist down if marketed, as it often is, before it's aged long enough. Another deadly concoction, common throughout the southern tier of states, has an accumulative action --that is, a couple of swigs may only make you sick, but poison collects in your system, until over a long period of time you've banked enough to kill you . . . In the Syrian Mountains, BANDIT DOLLS ARE BEING CAUGHT SMUGGLING NARCOTICS IN THEIR FALSIES.



Syria has no women cops, so the local constabulary is having itself a whale of a time with every broad who passes through check-out stations . . .

again. It was for Sardot a matter of pride, both professional and as a man, that the havoc he wrecked was of his *own* doing. And choosing. Working with the fast-growing FFI underground, Anton Sardot spent the next year and a half of the war driving the Germans to distraction.

As a guerrilla with a thousand faces Anton Sardot, sometimes a high ranking Nazi, sometimes a Vichy diplomat, worked the Paris arena to a fare-the-well. Officially, the Nazi refused to recognize Sardot's existence but unofficially they were so hard put for an explanation that a five million *Reichmark* reward was posted for his head. There were no takers.

Sardot's crowning achievement in the Paris theater was the theft of six Nazi lorries, the liberation of 200 British aviators from Kamstadt Prison (he presented transportation orders signed by Hitler, no less!) and then driving them through to Dunquerque where, by prearrangement, British destroyers removed all to sanctuary. Including the amazing Anton Sardot, who quit his native France just one jump ahead of a mechanized division of SS troops. Next he took up cudgels in the Netherlands.

Operating in Amsterdam, virtually under the Nazis' noses, the fabulous Frenchman reorganized the scattered Dutch resistance movement. With the help of co-operative *maqui* agents, some British radio equipment and a cluster of well-armed volunteers, the resistance that began in a cellar at No. 2 Ter Poorten Strasse soon became the nerve center of an operation termed by SHAEF "as one of the important weapons that ultimately contributed to the success of the Allied invasion on D-Day."

But D-Day was a long way off when the blue-eyed *maqui* set up his first missions in Amsterdam. The U-boat pens at Joulem, miniatures of the huge pens in France, came up for special attention. The German High Command, anticipating the day when every U-boat pen in the Nazi realm would become a prime target for Allied bombers, craftily deployed their shipyards throughout the occupation realm.

In the Netherlands, the nerve center of *Grossedamiral* Karl Doenitz' U-boat fleet was Joulem, and it inevitably became Anton Sardot's obsession. On May 22, 1942, meeting in a small farm at Kraag's Marsh, five kilometers from the shipyard, 30 men—a handful of Poles, French, British and Dutchmen—worked out the final details of the outside raid. Sardot's instructions were brief and explicit.

"Get the pens. We can always kill Nazis, gentlemen, so concentrate your efforts on reaching the source," he said. "We have dynamite, grenades and automatic weapons. They can be formidable in our hands."

The raid was timed for two-thirty in the morning, an hour when the night guard would be inclined to bust for the *kaffe klatch*. Never before had guerrillas attempted to attack the Joulem yard, and the complacency of the arrogant Nazi was at its fullest. These factors, plus one other—a moonless night—added up to a matchless opportunity in Sardot's estimation. The others, men in a large measure like himself, were desperate enough not to give a damn. "It is better to die like men than live like animals," Raoul Bettina, an aide of DeGalle, wrote to FFI headquarters in Paris. "This man Sardot is a tactical genius, beyond which he appears absolutely fearless and, I suspect, just a trifle too contemptuous of death for his own good. Of such stuff martyrs are

made, but nevertheless we will follow him . . ."

So they did.

The martyr complex didn't go quite as deep as Raoul Bettina suspected. Instead of the conventional frontal attack, Sardot elected the sentry box farthest removed from the Nazi command post. Technically, this was complicating the job. Practically, it made excellent sense, for if ever soldiers were prone to nodding off, it was the soldiers "in Siberia," at the farthest quarter of the shipyard. Time and again Dutch guerrilla girls had lured them away from the sentry gate. Knowing this, Sardot, relying on his judgment of the male animal, chose "Siberia" as the target for the attack.

At two-thirty, hiding in a narrow drainage ditch, Sardot's blackfaced guerrillas watched their group leader snake out along the dirt path to the shipyard wall. Simultaneously, along the south fork of the dirt road curving down from Joulem, two young Dutch girls in a seemingly drunken, collaborative mood, staggered toward the sentry post. The result left no room for improvement. As the girls hove into sight so did the Nazis, three of them emerging from the sentry house and slaving at the buxom blondes. One of the soldiers, the sergeant of the watch, doffed his steel helmet and clapped his hands in accompaniment:

"Goede avond, dames!" the German bawled in Dutch. "*Wij zouden hebben tentoonstelling?*"

Rough translation: How about a private strip-tease? The Dutch girls went into a huddle. The Germans stood goggle-eyed in the half light as both femmes went into a slow, sensuous strip tease, first peeling their coats and then starting on their dresses. Ecstatically the Nazis moved out of the box. They didn't see the swift blur that was Anton Sardot coming up behind them. They didn't see, period. Nor did they feel anything much—beyond the first strike.

Sardot's knife flashed three times, a single sweeping motion like a scythe in a field of wheat. The movement of his left hand, coordinated with the other movement, combined as a loop or circlet into which the three heads were thrust and onto which the knife blade fell. Even as their legs buckled and they sagged in the death throes, the swarm of guerrillas inundated the gate and three corpses were dragged into the shadows, stripped of their uniforms and dropped in the ditch. Three Sardot guerrillas guarded the gate as the others, forming in two groups, entered the U-boat pens of Joulem. Sardot traveled ahead of them, alone.

The rest was academic. In 20 minutes, the two groups disappeared into the huge submarine foundry, planted their dynamite and vanished as mysteriously as they arrived. Their leader took on the foreman's shack where three Nazis were blueprinting the new 1820 ton *milch* cow. He knifed them all at the planning boards, then fired a strip of magnesium, swiped a roll of prints, picked up a fresh German cigar and raced out into the night.

Joulem blew up into a glut of mile-high flames and the Nazis were out one submarine base, among other things.

Such attrition raids struck numbing terror among the enemy forces in Holland. Needless to say, they took prisoners, tortured innocents and put a thumping big price on the Frenchman's head, but nothing—not even the deaths of his family, which the Nazis carried out, incidentally—could deter Anton Sardot from his appointed duties.

"Don't you *care* what happens to your family?" somebody asked Sardot in the underground clearing station in Amsterdam.

The guerrilla leader sighed, shrugged and replied, "More than you think. But my family cares more for humanity than they do for themselves. The war is bigger than *all* the families, unfortunately . . ."

Anton Sardot had no martyr complex, but he did have a kingsize psychosis concerning everything Nazi, and generally speaking, countries which Nazis occupied. He had a pride to match his hatred and quite likely it was this pride that impelled him to over-extend himself twice in 1943. The first time Sardot was found near a blown up German coastal gun at Abbeville, half a hundred enemy troops dead in a heap around him. The second time was in the wake of a British Commando raid when, single handed, he executed a delaying fire to cover the retreating troops. Britain decorated him with the George Medal that year.

In 1944 a change came into the life of the gallant resistance leader. Upped three grades to colonel by General Charles DeGaulle, decorated profusely with everything that was in the FFI books, Anton Sardot suddenly was given one decoration that he didn't wholeheartedly enjoy—a *female aide de camp*. Furthermore, it was ordained that Sardot incorporate other girl guerrillas into the Dutch resistance movement and, like it or not, take them along on his sundry raids.

"But it's man's work!" Sardot complained bitterly. "They can't do this to me!"

In reply, DeGaulle merely fixed him with his famous stare and the colonel pulled his in proverbial horns. The girls had guns, and there wasn't any more to be said about it until the Dutch beauty, Maria Kos, came into Sardot's life. Other things that Sardot never counted on suddenly began to shatter his private version of the shooting war. Sorely responsible for the latter developments was also the voluptuous Netherlander, Maria Kos.

Feeling her way cautiously in the beginning, the girl, realizing that Anton Sardot would allow just so much female interference and no more, tried patiently to win the Frenchman over. She got nowhere, but she persevered despite Sardot's growing distemper. The war, he told his men, was going to hell.

But on March 1, 1944 when Maria Kos suddenly absented herself from Amsterdam, the queer thing that Sardot never anticipated, happened. He found himself missing her.

"Going to Nimejen," Kos wrote in her note. "*Want to check on the installation at River Waal. With luck will return in three days . . .*"

"Three days!" Sardot exploded. "Who the hell does that girl think she is—a private army?"

The people of the underground approved a private army as well as the Frenchman really did. But when Maria Kos failed to return in three days, and three became five and then six, they, too, began to doubt the wisdom of *femme de guerrilla*. Sardot blamed himself.

"I'll give her till tomorrow morning," the Frenchman snapped at his Dutch aide-de-camp, Einer Brougher. "If she's not back I'm going after her."

"I don't know how you'll take this, Anton," Brougher winced. "This note came earlier tonight. I wasn't going to show it to you until later—"

The Dutchman fished the note from

his jacket and the Frenchman, reading it slowly, turned crimson.

"She wants us to *what*?" Sardot roared. "Get her some bombs so she can blow up that bridge," Einer Brougher said softly. "Some girl, Sardot."

"Some damn fool, you mean!"

"What're you going to do?"

"I'll tell you what," Sardot snarled, writing out a list of explosives. "You round this equipment up and get me a cart. Nobody's going to do my job for me—and particularly a girl!"

"A pretty girl, Sardot," the Dutchman chuckled. "Oh, hell! Relax, Anton—she knows which end is up!"

"Thank you," Sardot said icily. "So do I. And I don't need any help keeping mine up, I'll have you know."

The Dutchman shrugged, looked at the list and walked out. Anton Sardot checked a wall map, strapped on a shoulder holster and a knife and walked to the window. In an hour it would be dark. In three hours with luck Sardot would find the crazy Netherlander and put her in her place, he told himself, somewhat unconvincingly.

Three hours later, Sardot found the girl in a barn. He read her notes. Her eyes were defiant and her mouth was very beautiful. Anton Sardot let the war take care of itself for a while . . .

On the night of March 11th, Maria Kos and the French guerrilla chief resumed hostilities. The job was something special. An entire division of Nazis was due to cross the River Waal en route to Amsterdam. Beyond this, there was the bridge and the bunker that the pair had taken under surveillance. Eight sentries patrolled the bridge; 88 more Germans were up in the big box.

At 11:45 Maria Kos cupped her fingers around her watch, noted the hour and glared reprovingly at the *maqui* outstretched beside her in a drainage ditch. The soft purling of the River Waal muffled the sound of her voice as she tugged, irritably, at Sardot's sleeve. She whispered, "Isn't it time yet? We have torpedoes to attach!"

Sardot grinned inwardly at the 'we,' Imperturbably, he looked beyond the girl toward the low scrub hills to the west where the German pillbox was framed in silhouette. The Frenchman rolled over and kissed her once more. She nudged him again and he grabbed the burlap sack with the bangalores. "I'll do my job," the Frenchman smiled. "You just remember to shoot that Browning for all you're worth!"

The train hooted twice in the distance and Anton Sardot jumped up the rise, vanishing among the black steel girders of the trestle. The searchlight of the moving train swept the stygian distance, and then it hooted again. In two minutes or less the train, carrying troops, guns and supplies for the new Schwerpunkt Division was due to cross the River Waal for Nimejen. Stopping it was Anton Sardot's responsibility.

The bombs, a combination of sensitive time-fuse and concussion bangalores, were held in his left hand as he raced through the foot girders over the river. Maria Kos caught sight of Sardot only once during those last seconds as the train rumbled down through the cliffs toward the river. She saw him suddenly emerge squarely between the two groups of German guards. She heard the surprised shouting and watched the jagged splinters of flame burst from the muzzles of the Nazi guns.

Opening fire with her Browning the

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Duch girl had a brief, terrible moment of satisfaction as the enemy toppled in grotesque relief, falling between the spanning girders into the black waters. She called to him but once and, failing to hear a reply, concentrated her gunfire on the pivotal corner of the bridge where other gunners were searching out her position. Her bullets crashed into the big dome searchlight mounted on the corner of the bridge and she heard Germans frantically

screaming for reinforcements. She watched the looming mountain of a train across the access trestle and, failing to stop when signalled, continue its pace across the Waal.

The blast was a livid red tower of flame that scorched the breath from her lungs. Concussion smashed her against the mud bank and another earth-jarring roar knocked her over and sent her rolling to the river. She saw the train—all ten cars

of train—lifted off the twisted mass of steel that had been a bridge and then heaved incongruously into the abyss below. The roar of explosions and sequence of screaming death became muted in her shocked brain. Something that is called the 'instinct for life' prevailed in her shrapnel-pocked body—and probably that was the only thing that saved her life after they found her.

In Amsterdam, two weeks later, Maria Kos made her report. The finding of the

board that heard her was sympathetic. The mission, after all, was a valuable one in that it was to further hamper enemy forces in the Netherlands and, specifically, to materially deny them 600 men and arms. Anton Sardot was given a hero's eulogy posthumously. They never did find his body. The board, comprised of other guerrillas, regretfully wrote off his death as "a man in love . . . perhaps too preoccupied with a new sensation to remember the art of killing with im-

punity . . ." Later it was revised. Somebody remembered that there was only one bomb with a fuse-timer, and that in order to make all eight bombs explode properly, they necessarily had to be exploded at once. Anton Sardot fused them all with his life, drawing enemy fire and so confusing the enemy that they forgot to stop the train as it crossed the River Waal.

Maria Kos died on a makeshift operating table almost a year later. She was giving birth to Sardot's child. **END**

MORRELL'S MADNESS

(Continued from page 13)

ancestry is French. My country is much French. How the hell could I do it and live with myself?"

"You live with me, love. You not the only European in our army."

"Well, don't tell me any names, Nalaga. I'm not interested! My only interest in this place is you. *You, Nalaga, my habibi jelly roll!*"

Her breasts prodded stiffly in the crimson *djellaba* and through the transparent, embroidered G-string skirt, he saw the dark rest of her. And Edmond Morrell, civilian, of French ancestry in the predominantly French city of Montreal, just didn't give a damn about anything but the warm, firm, responsive animal thing that was this young woman from the FLN (National Liberation Movement).

"*Andu dochan,*" the girl poked his cigarettes. He lit two. He pulled her to her feet and they went back into the small, veiled, smelly room that was Nalaga's private corner of hell.

The next day Edmond Morrell, civilian, lined up something that promised to be a job. Servicing air conditioners and refrigerators was like selling ice cream on a hot summer day on Coney Island. If you had what to sell you made a bundle. What made the guy who hired him take a shine to Morrell was another imponderable that Morrell couldn't figure out.

"Yanks and Canadians are few and far between around here," the guy finally told Morrell, when Edmond touched him for a couple of bucks in advance. "I may be a damned fool, but I like your cut, Mister. Don't make me regret hiring you."

"You won't."

"Married, Morrell?"

"No. Could be I will sometime, but single now."

"Woman, here?"

"One hell of a woman!" Edmond blew on his fingertips.

The sales and promotion man chuckled.

"They're artists, some of these babes. I gotta admit it. Years ago I knew an oversexed broad in Chicago. I thought there was only one like her on the earth then," the American grinned. "I was wrong. There's only one like her in Norte America—all the rest of 'em are here in Algeria."

"Maybe that's why the frogs don't wanna cut these people loose."

"No," the American shook his head. "Much more to it. Independence—funny damned thing, independence. I hate to

sound corny, but damned near two hundred years ago America went through something like this."

Edmond Morrell nodded. The man was Phil Porter, 45—a big built, broad shouldered guy who looked like he'd either played football for Notre Dame or punched steers in the Chicago stockyard. Morrell mentally measured every guy he met. It was an old fighting habit from his boyhood at St. Agathe. If you're French Canadian you fight. You fight to keep in shape and you fight because when you shuffle around King Street, the Anglo-Canadians would just as soon split your skull as look at you. Specially, if you're looking for an Anglo-Canadian woman. It didn't make sense, but then what the hell in life did? Morrell wondered.

At the end of his third day on the job, Morrell and an Algerian engineer were stuck down the coast at Malak. It had started out as a simple parts replacement jaunt. It ended with the Algerian and Morrell sweating out what amounted to a major overhaul. But finally it was done and they raced the truck down the ocean highway for Casablanca. At eleven that night Morrell checked out of his room and walked down through Casablanca to the Medina. By now he knew every crooked little alley in the Arab catacombs by heart. The *dingo* where Nalaga danced was loaded with Limey marines and French Senegalese troops, but his girl wasn't dancing.

Morrell walked up through a thousand smells, climbing a thousand steps. When he pulled back the curtain Nalaga was with a drunken white man.

"*Hey, if it ain't my star salesman! Hiya, boy! Come in and get yours next—this girl's the answer to an old man's prayer,*" Phil Porter roared gleefully. He moved off the girl and fell on to the wet tile floor, dressed only in socks, grinning drunkenly at Morrell. Edmond's fist closed into mallets. He kept his voice low. He looked past Phil Porter at the beautiful Arab girl.

"I can't take it, Nalaga. I'm a pretty broadminded guy, but I can't take it." The girl was crying then and Phil Porter began to sober up fast. "I quit, Porter. I figure there's a couple of bucks coming to me after today. I'll be in and see you mañana. If your broad here didn't savvy my English, you tell her in Berber. You tell passionate Nalaga here any damn thing that comes into your everlovin' head, Porter, but count me out of it—"

In a way Morrell hoped that Porter would climb up off the floor, but he knew there was no earthly reason to flatten a man who didn't know, who couldn't possibly know—who was just doing what any other man might do in Casablanca if he had the price of a Nalaga.

"Jesus, kid," Porter's sweaty face dripped salt water and his lips trembled as he said it. "Jesus, kid, I didn't know this girl was your private stuff. How the hell was I supposed to know? You think I'd

hurt a buddy like this, you think that, Morrell?"

"No, I don't think it," Edmond shook his long, sad, handsome head. "Only thing I know is I've gotta get out of this sewer—fast!"

After a year in the Foreign Legion—the year that Edmond Morrell had become, by Legion rules, an *ancien*, an old hand—there were no less than eleven tours into the burning desert outposts. It had been altogether different back in the tank corps. The Legion had tanks, but Morrell kept his background to himself and served along the prescribed lines. Nobody asked a man to do more.

His self-imposed banishment no longer a pet brooding matter while staring over the battlements of an oasis, Edmond Morrell had gone through the early terrorist days of relentless day and night attacks, with the imperturbable air of a man who couldn't care less. Morrell was a good soldier, but he didn't give a damn what happened in the Legion, its politics, its barracks fights, as long as people left him alone. And they did. Edmond the Legionnaire did not recruit under a *nomme de guerre*. He figured he had nothing to hide in the first place, and in the second place, just thinking up another name seemed like too goddamned much trouble. So he didn't bother. He was Private Edmond Morrell, St. Agathe, Canada, which was near enough to the truth as any. Had he cared to make a point of it, Morrell might've added to his dossier the DSO, American Silver Star, and 11 other medals. But he didn't care to have it known. Medals were like Nalaga—water over the dam, long gone like a dried up oasis in the scalding white sand.

The men of Morrell's company knew there was more to him than he cared to discuss, but they respected his feelings as he did theirs. There was a *rapport*, ostensibly strange and hard to understand, but it was something they all had as soldiers, brothers in animal sweat.

In a year, Edmond Morrell had pulled only one furlough and that was way downcoast, too far from anywhere to make much difference. It took a week of his furlough just to make Marrakech. Morrell could spit the hundred miles to Casablanca, but it hardly seemed worthwhile. So, like the rest of the lazy ones—"*mes petits cochons!*" Sergeant Georges Rondeau called them—Edmond Morrell, legionnaire, found an insatiable thirst for the strongest liquor money could buy and went on a roundhouse drunk for three days. He had no idea where he was when he awoke. And he had even less of an idea who the furlined dunghill belonged to. On a chaise, Morrell saw a scarlet *djellaba*, top and bottom, and at least he knew he wasn't messing around with an amateur . . . no amateur could steal a French jeep and gas. No amateur could be all the things Nalaga was.

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The Legion had its implacable non-coms, and then it had—one in a thousand, literally—a rare species of military man like Sergeant Georges Rondeau, whose only desire in life was to run a good outfit with the least possible trouble in the ranks. Rondeau was the living proof that a man could win a *Medaille Militaire*, command his own outpost and never—as a matter of personal pride—resort to disciplinary action. In Rondeau's company were many from the old 30th and 70th, Colonials, but during the emergency, men were scattered about as needed. At Miru-el-Rakin when the full scale attack started that afternoon, there were, in all, only 14 men, including the one in the hole. There were fifteen when the girl sneaked back into the fortress and found him.

It happened fast. The combined *fellagh-menharistes* attack was launched with half-tracks, rockets, machine guns, mortars and grenades. In the hole, a fetid black room below the main magazine of the ancient mud-and-wooden outpost, the only thing that Edmond Morrell heard was the heavy, concussive pounding of a 20mm gun seemingly moving in a circle about the outpost.

"*Habibi*, I told you—I told you to stay in the Medina!" Nalaga burst into tears.

"You crazy Arab bitch! Just because I sleep with you don't change my spots. It's my war up there too, damnit!" the Legionnaire screamed. "Tell me, Nalaga—they got big guns mounted on those trucks?"

The girl's head bobbed meekly, her face screwing up and wincing as the

heavy duh-duh-duh of the big gun crashed deafeningly above them. There was still another sound, a light machine gun and a barrage of rifle and automatic fire sounding loud enough to be a brigade attack. The girl sat on the mud steps of the hole and stared at the Legionnaire. A dozen times, Edmond Morrell pounded the door with his fists, screaming and cursing in French at the officious Georges Rondeau for keeping him locked up, out of the fight. Morrell didn't see the squad of burnoosed *gourmiers* run a bloody suicide line to the wall to throw up a ladder. He didn't see Sergeant Rondeau sit himself calmly at the top of the observation tower and call out ranges to the riflemen and the men on the lone '88, all of whom would likely be dead in fifteen minutes.

Morrell, pounding the heavy door, felt his fists swell up and the hot rush of blood every time he screamed and punched the lock. Nalaga closed her eyes and prayed for him, and paradoxically, for her own people. She fell flat on the hard dirt floor when the big cannon that had been shelling her people was wrestled away and trained on the magazine and barracks above.

"Edmond! If we can get upstairs, I can call my cousin—he commands the *menharistes*. He will take you prisoner and then you'll be safe!"

"In a pig's prat he will!" Morrell snarled. "Open up! For God's sake—open up this door!"

The Rebels opened it inadvertently. A succession of bazooka, 20 and '88 shells falling in concentration set off a roaring

explosion on the magazine level. The door punched out and off its hinges, and as Edmond Morrell and Nalaga picked their way through the rubble, they heard a last pathetic popping of rifle fire. In minutes the outpost was gone—three walls down; the jeep filled with dead men; eight dead men at the butts, and the magazine blown. Morrell found a revolver and pulled his woman to him.

It was not Nalaga's intention to be cut to pieces by the Berber knives. She wanted to scream. The only thing Edmond Morrell could possibly do was try to shut her up.

But even with the revolver that he pressed against the belly dancer's right ear, the *ancien* Legionnaire was damned sure that none of the Kabyle Berbers storming the wall would stop for anything less than total annihilation of the French force. Not the girl, who was one of them, not the fact that Nalaga's cousin was top *menharist* in the joint *menharist-fellagh* attack on Miru-el-Rakin, nothing would stop the shrieking horde of desert fighters.

Morrell knew this as his left hand closed tightly on Nalaga's olive-skinned cheeks, then inward pressing the gauze of her red veil into her sensuous mouth like a burnoose stuffed tight with deadly asps. When she bit him, the Legionnaire could do nothing but curse in her ear and threaten to blow her head off, but that did no good either, except to make her bite harder.

Morrell shoved his knee in her back and pulled the writhing body hard against him. Pieces of shale from the overhang

where Arab bazookas had blitzed a foot-thick blockhouse chipped down on the hard-bitten French regular, cutting like knife thrusts every flaming time the Rebel-captured '88 got in a few bursts at its former residence. Because he was shielding the girl with his own body, the flying chips of stone and metal did most of their damage to Morrell. A long cut opened up under his left eye and another in the fleshy part of one shoulder.

What happens now is unimportant, Morrell muttered to the belly dancer. *Vous etes finis, amie.* As the Americans say, this is the way the big ball bounces. The courtyard rear wall was a heap of crushed rubble and the white cloth robes of the victorious Rebels fluttered in the dusk. The glint of a rifle, a knife, a *menharist's* Sten suddenly showed in a profusion of spitting lead.

Morrell felt the inside of his belly scratching against his backbone. He pulled his torn left hand from Nalaga's mouth. If they catch her, she gets it too—only worse, because she's one of them. From French vermin it's expected, so they just kill me regulation like—but her. "Hey habibi," Nalaga snapped. "You want to make a run for the jeep? It's better than staying here and waiting for it."

The Arab girl spun around and saw the blood coursing down Morrell's face. She picked up his butchered left hand and kissed it. She was a hot blooded, fiercely nationalistic Arab belly dancer—a spy, a hustler, a blood lusting combination of all three, but Morrell didn't rightly know just then, or even care. He knew only that he was the most surprised, last surviving Legionnaire in the tiny outpost of Miru-el-Rakin, a good 50 kilos through open Algerian desert to Bir Niki, nearest fortification manned by 30th Colonial. And for all the Legionnaire really knew, Bir Niki, target of the Algerian pincer movement, had already been clobbered into dust too.

Morrell, first because he liked life and second because he was a soldier of France, kept squinting at the jeep through the broken wall where the Arabs had decimated its four occupants. The machine gunner looked asleep over the Sten, the driver's head had been blown off by a mortar shell. He lay in grotesque red lumps over the shattered windshield. Two dead Legionnaires in the back looked like a couple of drunks supporting each

other in sleep. A passing *menharist* had kissed the dead pair with a glancing jet of flame.

Thirty feet above the rubble and dead, Sergeant Rondeau slouched in his bright blue britches, his arms resting on a cross brace that had supported the *Tricolor* shortly before. Every time the Arabs shot the flagstaff, Rondeau had calmly replaced it by hand. One time he stopped. Over the bridge of his nose was a blue rifle hole; another hole was right under his Adam's apple. There were eight other dead men at the wall, and when the wind caught them right the stench was sickening.

"Well, Nalaga, *ma cher*," Morrell watched the girl ripping her wardrobe to hell for his benefit. "What'll it be—try to crawl under a rock so your *gourmiers* will have to look for us, or take a long shot and boot those former friends of mine off that jeep and make a run for Bir Niki. What'll it be?"

"*Ce ne fait rien*," the Arab girl shrugged. "It don't matter. Hold me, Morrell! You make up both our minds, *habibi*."

Morrell felt the inside of his belly scratching his backbone. He pulled his gashed hand from Nalaga's quivering mouth. If they catch her, she dies a slow death. They must know about the jeep. They must know she brought me here. I'm French vermin; if I'm lucky I die regulation. But the girl...

"*Habibi*, Nalaga," Morrell pulled the girl into his arms. "Let's make a run for the jeep. Here it comes out worse, *habibi*."

They were all dead in the outpost—all of them, even the kindly Sergeant sitting cross-legged up in the tower, the *Tricolor* shot to pieces, fallen now and covering Rondeau's death face. Bir Niki was 50 kilometers away and worth a try, Morrell thought now.

It was over, the last of it, the whole rotten business of defender-attacker, attacker-defender. Edmond Morrell crept forward as the first of the bearded, knife-wielding *gourmiers* screamed and the old-fashioned fanatical Kabyle Berbers crashed up through one wall and charged the abandoned bunkerhouse. They were shouting, popping off their guns in the air and pulling each other's beards ecstatically as the more mechanized, modern *menharistes* slowly circled the demolished outpost.

Morrell, crouched behind the girl, found a bandolier of grenades and drag-

ged them over the smoking rubble to the one piece of wall shielding them from the whooping Berbers. What remained of the outpost was scarcely debris. The grotesque corpse of Sergeant Rondeau suddenly was no longer sitting astride the tower. A *jellagh* youth put one sandal against his bloody face and shoved. The Sergeant and *Tricolor* crashed simultaneously and the sound was drowned by the victory scream of more than 200 men. All this and the mutilation of the eight corpses on the high wall, took place in the waning light over Miru-el-Rakin.

After dark, the Legionnaire and the Arab girl crept to the jeep and there sat, each silently wondering if the celebration inside the outpost would continue unabated and loud enough to start a motor. Morrell didn't think so. After removing the bodies and putting their dogtags and wallets in his jacket, the Canadian hid the girl behind some rubble and waited for the only two sentries on the north wall to stroll by. He had no knife, but the butt of the .45 sufficed if swung in a looping semi-circle. It was a neat trick and Morrell was soaked with sweat when he let the swing go. Two eggshell sounds disappeared into the desert night.

The Legionnaire and the Arab girl rolled the jeep down the side of the long hill, and then the Legionnaire hugged the girl briefly before turning on the ignition.

"Stay down! Stay down no matter what happens till I say otherwise!"

The sound of that jeep motor to Morrell was like the reassuring roar of a B-36. On the hill where the Arab fires filled the gutted outpost, the sound was heard but then disputed, but by that time the jeep was tearing off without running lights on a northerly line. Bir Niki had a grace period, Nalaga told the officer-in-charge, of no more, no less than another day. That warning was sufficient to get a radio message off to Colonial headquarters. By midnight, a mechanized column was racing for the Melousa district.

By midnight, Nalaga was dead. She slowly, sadly disentangled herself from Morrell's arms, put his .45 in her mouth and pulled the trigger. A couple of days later, Morrell walked out into the desert talking to his own *habibi*, Nalaga, and telling her there wasn't anything for either of them to worry about anymore. There wasn't. His body they never found. **END**

DEVIL SNAKES DIE HARD

(Continued from page 19)

taken a pot shot at the visitor—a *Regal Python*. We had seen him only momentarily. From that fleeting look, we knew he was a huge snake, the kind you hope never to see outside a zoo.

"Did you feel that?" Doug's whisper jarred me. I hadn't felt anything more than the rhythmic rise and fall of our cargo of logs. Still, there had been a slight pressure upward on the poles that held the logs of the raft together.

The screech brought Doug to his feet ahead of me. Together we peered into the blackness.

"Can't see a blasted thing," Doug growled.

"Fire a shot anyway. That was George, all right."

The blast of orange flame and the "roar" that filled our ears were comforting evidence that we still had protection. But it was just as dark as ever outside the shack.

"Everything's too wet to burn," Doug cursed.

I'd already considered pulling apart some of our shack to make a blazing fire so we could have some real light. But the monsoon had been blowing up the valley more than a week now and everything aboard was soaking wet.

There wasn't a sound from out there among the logs. "Poor George," Doug said, "he was a swell bird." I nodded. That white cockatoo had been our mascot. Now there was nothing alive aboard the raft except Doug and myself—and our visitor.

Doug reloaded the shotgun and then looked at me. "What do we do now, Tex?"

"Stay in the light and sweat him out until morning."

We sat down again on the wet logs, munching cheese and biscuits and all the while kept our weapons handy as we listened for the faintest sound that would give us, a moment's warning before attack.

Up in Colorado the Spring before I met Doug. He was looking for something more exciting than gold-panning to make some real money during the summer vacation. As a botanist, Doug Bairn had access to a wonderful library. And I was fed up with the usual car-buying-and-selling offers my pals at school in Texas kept making.

Doug approached me one day. "Listen, Tex, would you be game to go half way around the world, if we could make some serious money before we got back?"

"Sure," I shot back. "What's the pitch?"
 "This is no cut-and-dried proposition. You won't find anyone who's done it because it's just come up. But with your know-how and my special knowledge, we might be the team to do it—without it costing us much cash."

I looked him square in the eye. "Keep talking."

"I've got a hunch. You don't mind hard work, do you?"

"Not if it's hefting opals, say, or platinum, or rubies."

"You're close. What about wood, very valuable wood?"

"Ah, there's no wood we could make money on. The big companies control every stand of good timber here. And in South America too."

"That's not what I mean. The wood I have in mind is in great demand. And nobody has any for sale. That interest you?"

"Good story. Tell me more." I sat back, blowing a smoke ring into the air.

"Laugh if you want, but wait until you've heard me out," Doug said. Then he gave me the facts as he'd run across them in his research. "There are millions of Chinese living outside China today. They can go back, but don't want to. No freedom, and low pay. And though supplies are being shipped into Red China, nothing comes out."

"What's that got to do with wood?"

"Coffins, man, *coffins*. Chinese everywhere in the world want to be buried in the land of their ancestors, in coffins made of a special kind of sandalwood, called Kangsu. It's an aromatic cedar—grows in Yunnan province in southwest China."

"Oh, no. None of that behind-the-line stuff, Doug. Too easy to lose your scal to the commies."

"Relax, man. Kangsu also grows upper Burma. Lots of it. But the Shans and Naga tribesmen won't cut it. They're hunters. Won't even let their women cut wood except for cooking. If we went in and brought out a real load of Kangsu there'd be a terrific market in Singapore, Bangkok, Manila, all over the Far East outside China."

"What's it worth?"

"Twice the price of teak. Slabs have to be about two inches thick, but we could bring it out in logs, then get it cut down to size in Rangoon. Before Yunnan was cut off, men carried slabs of Kangsu a thousand miles on their backs to reach the market—every Chinese man living outside the mainland."

"Couldn't we hire the local boys in Burma—say, pay them double wage?"

"Nope. Not for any money. They're so proud of being hunters, they figure cutting wood's beneath their dignity. That's why the stuff is still there. Only the way to get it is by ourselves."

"Fella, you sure think big. Tell me how do we pull this off?"

"Like pioneers. Boat upriver. Then we get to Kangsu area, cut the trees into coffin lengths. The two of us, maybe with a third man, and a log chain could handle seven-foot lengths of log."

"Then what?"

"Make a raft and float everything down the river."

"One important question," I smiled.

"Who chops?"

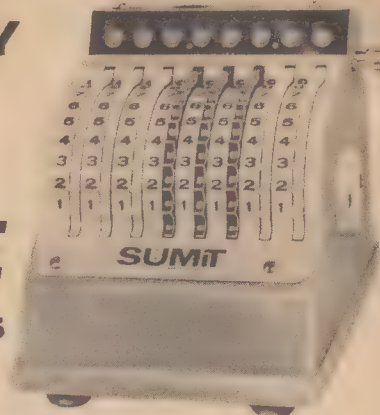
"Nobody. We use a chain saw."

The idea was so fantastic that I began to see its possibilities right away. That was the thing about Doug; his scientific brain

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really digs for the answers. And he was right. The more we learned in trying to find the bugs in this one, the more certain we became that it was a good idea.

When we got through raising dough for freighter passage across the Pacific, we knew we'd taken on an expensive proposition. If it worked, we stood to make more than \$10,000 from about two months' work. But before we made one cent, each had to lay out more than \$400 in freight fare. Then there were passports, visas, inoculations, etc. The stuff we'd both used on summer camping trips was our equipment. Except the chain saw. We were lucky with that. When Doug's father heard what we were trying to do, he came up with the saw.

"You lads are betting on a long shot no horse-player would touch," he told us. "I've been putting away a little money to give Doug when he graduates. Better to give you a real weapon for economic warfare. You can always sell the saw in the Far East and get deck-passage home."

He wasn't kidding. We were buying one-way passage. We figured we'd either hit it big and fly back or, if we missed, ship home as crew men on a freighter. So we'd miss a semester of school. We'd learn a lot.

"You were a pipe handler on an oil rig, Tex weren't you? Well, after that knocking down tall trees ought to be a cinch."

"You pick out the shrubbery, and we'll deliver the goods, man."

A month after we caught the bus for Los Angeles, we made Manila. From there it was 10 days to Rangoon. We talked with a big Chinese merchant there. He assured us Doug's hunch was right.

"I'll buy every stick of lumber you deliver. You can have it all."

afternoon as we sweated against the current, paddling with our boys. We made for shore then and unloaded our gear. We paid off the boys, unlimbered our equipment, and next day cut our first Kangsu wood.

"Smells like a stuffy museum," I commented.

"Lovely stuff," Doug mused, inhaling deeply. •

The chainsaw was a marvel. It cut through two-foot logs like butter. Ahmin could hardly believe the amount of work we did with it, until time came to get the short logs down to the riverbank beside our camp. Then we cut end-notches and split the biggest ones so no log was too much for the three of us.

Those six weeks we spent before the rains came were the kind you dream about but seldom experience. We worked hard all day cutting down trees, slicing them up and levering the slices down to camp and riverside. The weather was warm, but not oppressive. There were game birds for the taking, and a few visits from Naga tribesmen. We got along well with them. I almost traded the rifle to one hunter for a huge, ornamented, jade-handled ceremonial knife. But Ahmin talked me out of it. "City men very angry you let Naga hunter take rifle." I realized it was good advice and skipped the tempting deal.

When the first cloudburst came, we were ready. After two days of rain, we knew the water was deep enough to float our fortune downriver. And the shrewd time to get out was now. We'd used up nearly all our food, flashlight batteries, shotgun shells, camera film, cigarettes, and clothes. In the two months since we'd left Rangoon we'd sweated and grunted and shoveled a lot of

three lines down the middle, we're ready to lash logs and start rolling," I told Ahmin that morning.

Doug and I pounded pegs, lashed logs, and built the big raft before noon. We gave the last of our candy and salt to some Nagas who saw us clearing out. We wanted to leave on friendly terms in case we decided on a return visit. With Ahmin sweating to get the makings of a shelter on the raft, we were ready. The shove-off was easy, with some help from the tribesmen on the riverbank. Once we were under way, we knew nothing could stop that raft, barring a major catastrophe like having the thing ripped apart by some underwater boulder. The current picked us up and we raced down the river. We were a trio of Tom Sawyer characters on the Chindwin.

Ahmin not only built a shelter for us, he built a small one for himself up forward, where he slept with his dog and a cockatoo Doug had winged and then patched up.

We'd had five days of that rainy-but-idyllic life, getting back our breath and looking forward to civilization, when the snake dropped aboard. I was asleep and Doug was dozing after the first afternoon rain. It wasn't yet sundown, though the light was already cut off by the hills to the west.

"Aieeeee! We kill!" Ahmin shrieked. Then came the sharp crack of the rifle followed by a loud splash.

I raced out of our shack back aft. The sight nearly took my breath away. A long dark something was rapping at Ahmin's dog, smacking him in the ribs like a jack hammer. It looked like a super-thick hawser gone mad. The dog was snapping silently, but snapping late every time the thing shot forward and hit him. Ahmin was dancing backward and finally a thing hit the dog hard enough to rock him against Ahmin's legs. Dog and man splashed overboard, only to come



up swimming as the raft moved slowly by them. Ahmin made no attempt to swim back to the raft. He was only 10 feet away.

"Where's the rifle?" I shouted.

"Rifle knock overboard, Mister Tex."

"Come back, man. Don't swim away."

"That's the river king. He hit me. We go ashore here, catch up with you tomorrow. You kill him, or he kill you, Mister Tex."

"Who's this river king?" I yelled, as Ahmin drifted away.

"Your visitor on raft, Mister Tex. River King is squeeze-snake!"

Ahmin wouldn't swim back to the raft. He made for shore, less than a 100 yards away, his dog swimming silently beside him. Doug had seen almost as much as I had. "Must have been a python," he said.

"A foot thick? Couldn't have been a snake, Doug. It was batting the dog straight-on with its head. Looked like somebody was jabbing a log at him, only it wasn't ■ log . . ."

"It was a python," Doug repeated. "They do that, until they can get ■ coil around their victim."

"Think he's still out there? Can't see any sign of him."

"I can't either, but I kind of doubt that he dropped off, not that big boy." Doug looked at me then. "What did Ahmin call him? River King?"

"Yeah. He was plenty scared."

"So am I. But I'd still rather be here than wherever he is, now that it's getting dark. Hope he makes out all right."

"He will," I said. I felt certain of that. "He'll either find help or go up a tree. He's got a lot of savvy."

"That's about all we got right now," Doug said, tapping the shotgun in his hand. "Bird shot," he said with disgust.

In the gathering dusk, all the logs up forward looked alike. We wouldn't know ■ log from a python until he had a half-Nelson on one of us. And slipping around among those short logs . . .

"If we use our heads, Tex, our visitor may leave tonight."

"Right. We better wait—inside the shack. If he does come nosing in, we might be able to get a crack at his head . . ."

That was how it was, except for when we heard the cockatoo scream its last. All through the night we waited. Twice we thought we heard a rustling noise right outside the shack. Might have been our raft, or it might have been our visitor. Anyway, nothing came of it either time. The single flaring flame of that oil lamp was about the most valuable thing in our lives that night. Outside, it would have been blown out, or drowned out quickly by the rain. We couldn't risk getting caught in total darkness with the River King aboard.

Neither of us had any desire to doze. When your life depends on staying wide awake and alert, you do it. And with real money right under us and only a short distance from delivery, we had everything to fight for. We'd already been dreaming of the things we could buy back home, and of the big trip we would make upriver next year.

Then the first morning light came filtering in. We sat and watched the ghostly mist rising from the river. When we could see more clearly, Doug stood up, stretched, and blew out the flame in the lamp. "Ready?"

"Ready as I'll ever be." I clutched the cane knife, wondering how tough a really big snake could be, and how close we



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had to get for that bird shot to take effect. At a distance it would only sting him. Up close it could bore a hole six inches deep. But we'd have to get the hole in the right place—the head. A snake big enough to smack a man over backwards was nothing to joke about. There'd be hundreds of pounds of him, for he was bound to have a great length, being a foot thick.

"Let's go." Doug had extra cartridges in one hand. He cocked the hammer of the gun and moved out of the shack onto the raft, watching where he put his feet with more than usual care.

Each log before me looked different. I kept watching for a head or a wiggling body to come up in the oily liquid seams between logs. It wasn't until we were half way to Ahmin's shack that we sighted him. What seemed to be a five-foot wide, mottled brown-and-black pile of rubbish suddenly had parallel lines. They were coils. In the center was a head less than six inches wide, a black line running up from its snout.

"Get in as close as—" I didn't have a chance to finish. In a motion so swift it took me completely by surprise, the head darted out at me from a good 10 feet away. I felt a stunning blow on my leg and my other foot slipped.

"I'll get him," Doug shouted. Looking up, I saw him brace himself and fire.

Trying to regain my feet, I saw Doug back up a couple of steps. He ejected the spent cartridge and was just closing the breech on the new load when the python struck him in the legs with that ramming head of his. Doug went down and the gun fired in the air harmlessly.

The cane knife was still in my hand, and I was glad of that. Keeping my footing, I rushed in and took a vicious whack at the great snake's undulating body. The knife went through the slime-coated hide and into the large body, but the snake didn't even seem to notice. The small head was battering at Doug, who was still down. Then I saw with horror that there was a single great loop around Doug's legs.

I kept slashing at the huge python, wounding it maybe two or three times before I was sent spinning backward. I don't even know if the blow was from the snake's head or a convulsive smash from his body. Anyway, the cane knife sailed out of my hand and splashed into the river. Through my dazed brain came Doug's scream. "Get the s-a-w!" Then his voice died and became a rasping choke. His face was white.

I scrambled over the logs toward the shack. The saw was our last and final means of defense. Oh, God, that it would only start. Rain and condensation of moisture for five days since we used it, I thought desperately. Grabbing it, I ran back toward the pile of logs. I didn't dare look at Doug. I turned the fuel release and pulled the starter handle.

The motor caught! I gunned it with the throttle, and pressed the chain for cutting. It whirled wonderfully and I held it out, hoping the snake would strike at that chain. No such luck. That was when I saw there were two coils, now going on three, around Doug's body. And I walked the whizzing chain saw into the great snake's body. It bit in and a pink mist wafted away. Again I shoved the saw at the python. The spray of blood was stronger, and thick chunks of tough, moist flesh blew away from the spinning teeth. With horrible contortions, the python's body rose far over my head. I turned and lunged at the nearest coil and

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again felt the whirling blade chewing through living flesh.

All of a sudden the blade cut clean through the snake's body and two wildly gyrating, blood-spurting ends tore loose, leaping high into the air and then flopping back to the logs and coiling again. This time the python's head struck at the chain only to rear back in pain, almost split in half, the white jaw bone showing in a horrible grimace. I waded in again, the saw biting into those thick coils like they were wet, squirming wood. The tail half was the longest. The saw had almost cut completely through a second time, before the writhing tail almost completely let go of Doug.

He was still conscious but in shock. With the python's parts still thrashing horribly over the wet logs, I cut the engine and put the chain saw down. Miraculously I hadn't slipped, for I could have taken off one of my own legs just as easily as I'd sawed the monster River King into small pieces. Nothing else would have done it. The cane knife couldn't have hacked through him in five minutes. The saw did it in less than 15 seconds.

"Doug, old boy, are you going to make it?"

He raised an arm. The hand gave a kind of half-wave, sideways. "I'm gonna make it. But for a minute . . . I thought this was going to be my coffin wood . . ." He was grinning when he passed out. His own joke did him in, because when he tried to laugh his cracked and broken ribs hurt too much.

We reached Monywa and a doctor that day, and made a good, quick deal with the Chinese merchant. The next day we caught the boat to Rangoon, and then had an easy flight back home. Now, like Doug says, we really have to go back next year, to look up Ahmin, I'm sure he made it all right, and that the three of us will make another killing next year. And I don't mean just of Regal Pythons, either.

END

RETURN TO DEAD-END ISLAND

(Continued from page 33)

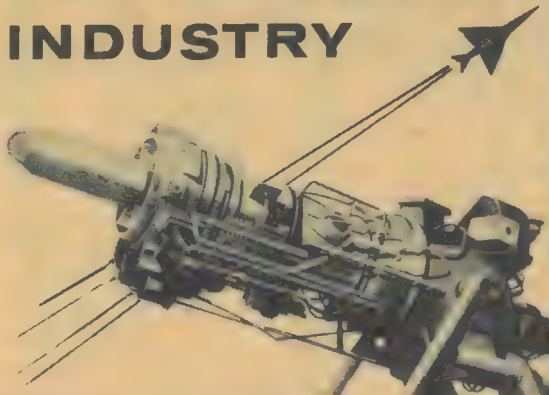
I was allowed to sleep. But during the night, some of the Queen's subjects climbed into the hut and by Her Grace's leave, I was cast to the lions. My stamina apparently had something to do with the coconut juice. There were no complaints.

Awaking the following noon, my head throbbing, my body aching, my throat tasting like a mixture of cotton and sandpaper, the first thing I saw was a quartet of svelte young ladies-in-waiting. They were sitting at the foot of my "bed" with bowls of perfumed water and more coconut juice. Despite my halfhearted protests, I was scrubbed lightly—every square inch of me—my hair was combed, my body anointed with a fragrant oil. Queen Loras appeared shortly after and so did a bite of food. What it was I had no notion—except that it was delicious and it seemed to put a little life back in my limbs.

Roughly an hour later, the ladies-in-waiting retreated and the Queen stretched out beside me on the matting. She smiled,

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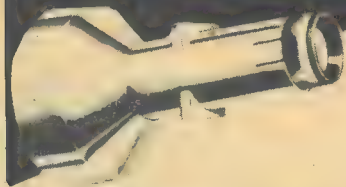
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patted the matting and slowly pulled me down. "I'd like a little fresh air—" I groaned. She mumbled something and bit through my ear. Only much later did she walk with me to the lagoon. The boat was still there, but my friend Cob wasn't. Our entourage commented laughingly on the short, fat Samoan with gestures, but since Cob wasn't about, I assumed he'd either come ashore after all or was sleeping in the cabin. Oddly, neither Lorasa nor her women swam out. I sat on the beach beside her, the 300 women around us, while she twined her strong bronze arms around me again. I passed out. Two or three times that day, I awoke to find myself with other women and my hostess watching the proceedings.

Always, when I awoke, there would be the coconut juice—followed by about an hour's breather. My body was numb, and my mind terrified. Toward dusk, I was conducted on a tour of what could be called Maniliki's museum. Skulls, skin bones, knives, muskets—human skin with the tattoos still bright stretched to wooden frames—and a weird assortment of other grisly objects, comprised Lorasa's collection. I tried to keep her absorbed in the discussion, but it didn't work. She tired of walking and pulled me fondly to the ground. Around us were women, giggling and moaning in the throes of desire...

Pain stabbed my eyes. The drug, Lorasa wouldn't let me go. Once, because some regal business required her presence elsewhere, she left me in custody of her royal guard. Four statuesque six footers. Fantastically gorgeous women they were, with fantastic appetites, and they all hit me at once. Had it not been for the merciful reappearance of Lorasa I'd have surely died in the attempt. Instead I passed out for the last time, there being just so much vitality in the living male even under the influence of powerful stimulants. I didn't last half of my allotted 72 hours.

Regaining consciousness, I was lying on the floor of the ceremonial hut with perhaps a third of the island's population in attendance for my ceremonial execution. The nude, lithe, sensual women of Maniliki were swaying and dancing my death dance. Lorasa, lovelier than ever, sat beside me carving at my lighter with her knife. It was a short, double-edged knife, the handle of which was set in real pearls. As the tempo of the music increased, the beat increased and the writhing became more exciting. Lorasa stopped carving the lighter and slowly drew the blade across my chest.

Closing my eyes, my hand edged forward along her thighs until I touched the lighter. I felt my own blood spilling down my ribs as her black hair swished across my face. The sweat of her body fell on my face and again I closed my eyes, praying, trying to grope for the one thing I wanted. Then I felt it. The racket in the *taupo* was so loud that the soft sound of flint grinding against steel wasn't heard. That was all I needed. I lay there waiting for the screams—and when they came I moved—fast. That *popui* of dried froinds went up like a bonfire.

Suddenly women shrieked and began battering themselves to death trying to squeeze through the narrow door. Lorasa beside me, jumped up shouting orders. I could barely see, and my legs felt like jelly—but when she jerked me up and lifted me over her shoulders, the gaggle of frenzied women parted. Outside in the open air my head seemed to clear. The *popui* blazed fiercely, the heat surging out over the stilted village. Lorasa, more concerned with Maniliki now, deposited

me beside a guard of one, and raced off to put out the holocaust. I took the guard out single-handed.

In my condition that was quite an accomplishment. I'd never slugged a woman before, but this one I hit with all 175 pounds of pretty used-up beef. Then I crawled, played dead and crawled again until the smell of the lagoon reached me. The boat was still there. Sobbing, my body shrieking with agony, blood spewing out of an inch deep gash in my chest, I lay on the dinghy paddling with both arms. When I was halfway there I began shouting for Toli. Then I passed out again. Then somehow I was in the cabin, bandaged from side to side, when I felt something being crammed into my lips.

"No more coconut juice! Please!" I moaned. "No more—"

"Wake up, Lang! Wake up, boy—this'll straighten you out—"

"No more coconut juice!"

"This is Old Grandad, boy," the voice soothed. "Come out of it . . ."

Didn't I, though! I started talking . . . and I kept on talking—through tranquilizers and shock injections—ranting my head off about dead-end island. Nobody in Samoa doubted my story for a minute. The only thing they doubted, till I showed 'em the scar, was that I had actually been there. And even then they called me a liar just about to my face. Just about? Hell, they were laughing the rest of the time! Any man who makes Maniliki is as good as dead anyway, they shrugged me off. Dead men, even in today's Samoa, don't tell tales—especially old wives' tales . . .

END

RIDE OF THE NAKED WARRIORS

(Continued from page 17)

the headland they'd have to pass on the right to reach the anchored ships.

Suddenly a searchlight stabbed through the darkness, bathing them in its bright glare. Rossetti instantly cut the engine and the men pressed themselves against the torpedo, trying to look small. For a terrifying instant the beam hovered on their glistening, black-greased faces, and to them the torpedo seemed as big and visible as a whale—but then the beam moved on in its search for intruders.

At last they came to the first of the chief obstacles—a chain which was strung on buoys across the harbor mouth. Was it booby-trapped? Would contact with it touch off explosives in the buoys or send warnings to sentries on shore? There was only one way to find out. With the engine off the two men wrestled the 3,000 pound torpedo across the chain, carefully guarding the propellers as they shoved the chain deep enough to slide it across. The scrape of metal against metal was like a traitorous shriek to their ears, but when nothing happened after a five-minute wait Rossetti started the engine again and moved to the next chain.

This they successfully hurdled in the same way, and their next contact came with the anti-submarine net. This hung from huge rafts and buoys that jutted up several feet above the surface, and the metal meshes were too small to push the torpedo through. Working with wire

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SEE PAGE 71

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cutters that threatened at any moment to slip from his hand, Paolucci cut a gap in the net about four feet below the surface. Now they had to risk starting the engine in order to be able to let the planes submerge the torpedo and carry her through. The whole harbor seemed deathly quiet as the props whirled, but they made it through the net and risked riding on top of the torpedo until they came to a barrier of floating timbers surmounted by three-foot-high spikes.

All around the timbers floated gas cans tied close to each other to make a racket if anything disturbed them.

Fortunately for the Italians the cans were useless as warnings when the sea was rough, and under the protection of their clatter they were able to ride the submerged torpedo right under the barrier and 100 yards beyond—which was as long as they could hold their breaths.

They were inside the harbor now, and they could make out the fleeting shapes of patrol boats whipping around in their endless search for trouble. The dark silhouettes of the big warships began to take identifiable shape, and when he saw the great shadow of the *Viribus Unitis* Rossetti grabbed Paolucci's arm so hard he almost ripped the rubber suit.

"There she is!" he said hoarsely.

They cut the engine and rested awhile, knowing that from now on they would have only limited use of the engine and would have to push the torp to the target for fear of being heard.

"She's beautiful!" Rossetti whispered after examining every telltale feature of the shadowy capital ship to make sure that it was indeed the *Viribus Unitis*.

Paolucci couldn't stifle a chuckle. "Beautiful? I don't think you mean that the way it sounds."

There was still considerable distance to go, and they knew their mission was quickly approaching its most dangerous point. The patrol boats sped closer now, and seemed to circle the big warships in an established pattern. The frogmen could make out the *Prinz Eugen* some distance beyond the *Viribus Unitis*, and a number of cruisers.

Pushing, swimming and occasionally resting, they brought the torpedo close to the lanes where the patrol boats raced by with methodical regularity. There was no danger now from the shore searchlights, since they wouldn't risk lighting up their own ships, but now the danger of discovery was increased because of the night-duty watches aboard the ships anchored along the route to their target. Push. Swim a little. Drag the torpedo a few yards. Stop, look, and listen fearfully. Push. Swim. And on and on, progress agonizingly slow. Rossetti learned they'd been in the water almost six hours when he consulted the luminous watch he kept in a glass case tied to his neck inside his suit. It was past the time they'd scheduled for the delivery of the warhead.

But now, if they could slip past the patrolling speedboats, they'd have it made. The big target, the *Viribus Unitis*, couldn't be more than half an hour away.

Fate favored them at this point, because the patrol boat suddenly changed its routine, and veered off in the direction of the *Prinz Eugen*. As he offered up a silent prayer, Rossetti studied the lay of the anchored fleet, noting the outlines of the *Franz Ferdinand*, *Zriny*, *Radetzky*, and *Erzherzog*, and planned his course to the *Viribus*.

"All right, Raffaele," he said to Paolucci, patting his friend's shoulder. "Let's go—and God go with us."

"We're going to make it, comrade," Paolucci said fervently.

The push-swim-drag ordeal continued, but now progress seemed tangible as the shape of the warship loomed larger and larger. Despite the cold and the wind-whipped waves, Rossetti could almost feel beads of perspiration on his forehead as they drew nearer and nearer. Now, there could be no such thing as failure—as if that thought had ever really been entertained as anything but a remote possibility. This, Rossetti felt, would be the climax of his whole navy career, the justification, perhaps, of his living.

In war, some men seek to prove themselves, others to defend or vindicate an ideal. Still others are motivated by hatred and revenge, while a precious few just go through the motions, feeling nothing. There were two things uppermost in Rossetti's mind as he and Paolucci pushed through the water silently, dreading every sound, fearing every splash in the lapping waves, apprehensive of the sentries who could be heard treading the steel decks of the warship. One was that the good name of Italy, which had been maligned in the world's eyes when her armies were disastrously routed at Caporetto, would be restored. The other was that his secret weapon, which had been the object of scorn, suspicion, and ridicule, would prove itself.

As they came alongside the *Viribus Unitis* Rossetti was suddenly aware that the torpedo had gone logy, and was slowly but steadily sinking. Desperately he fiddled with valves and levers, trying to locate the trouble, until at last he found that an intake valve had been knocked loose by the constant battering the torpedo had taken while being dragged through all the obstacles. Quickly he tightened it, twisted another valve, and the torpedo came back to an even keel.

Now for the staggering job for which they'd trained with weights in the lagoon waters off Venice. After setting the timing devices on the forward barrel of the warhead, Rossetti undid the clamps that held it to its companion, and then gave Paolucci the end of a two-fathom cable which was riveted to the barrel. Paolucci swung the cable over the torpedo, holding it tight as Rossetti grasped the 400-pound charge to his chest and descended.

With Paolucci snubbing on the cable, Rossetti was free to explore the ship's side with one hand, seeking a likely place to attach the charge. It was past 4:00 a.m. now, and dawn would be breaking at 4:37, so this was no time for trial and error.

Signalling by jerks on the cable, he descended almost to the limit of its length, when he found a couple of projecting flanges which were ideal attachments for the warhead. His lungs near the bursting point, he signalled he was coming up, and popped through the surface a moment later. Gulping a lungful of air, he went down again, and this time found one of the clamps stuck as he wrestled the mine into position. Again he had to go up, to get Paolucci's wire cutters to use as a lever in the eye of the clamp.

At last the warhead was clamped against the ship's side, and he set the timer for 6:30 a.m. He was dizzy from lack of air but he checked everything to make sure there were no snags. He realized, suddenly, that the cable was dangling in the water and he hadn't signalled Paolucci to let go of it. What could have happened to his comrade?

When he got to the surface Paolucci



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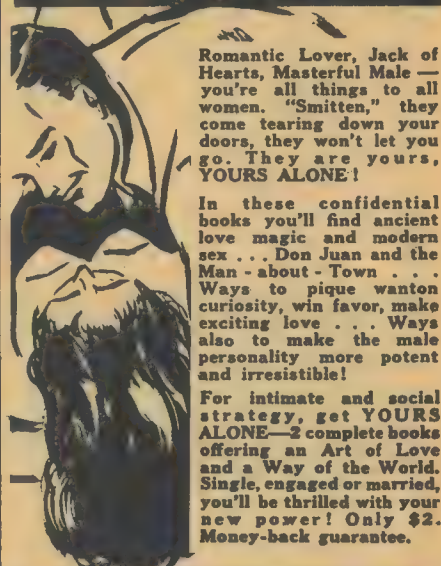
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was nowhere near the ship's side, where he'd left him. As he sighted along the ship he saw what had happened; the warship had swung with a change of current and Paolucci had been swept away from the vessel. Instantly he started swimming in the direction the current would have taken his buddy. Every few strokes he stopped and looked for a dark blob on the surface, and when he didn't see anything, he swam some more, veering in the direction of the after end of the ship. He was well away from the *Viribus Unitis*, out in the main stream, when he suddenly spotted Paolucci who had almost decided to start the engine in spite of the nearness of many warships.

In a few powerful strokes, Rossetti made it to the torpedo.

"How did it go?" Paolucci whispered.

"Only so-so," Rossetti said. "We'll know better at 6:30. Now let's get this one placed—we've only got about ten minutes before dawn."

But now, not daring to start the engine, they found themselves at the mercy of powerful currents. They were swept under the transom of a big troopship, narrowly missing the rudder-post, and then swung spinning with the torpedo in a small whirlpool filled with garbage. After a couple of seconds they whirled out of this, the torpedo skipping them instead of vice-versa, and the two men were pulled back toward the *Prinz Eugen*. Dawn had broken unspectacularly, for it was another gray and misty day, and presently they heard bugles blowing reveille throughout the anchored fleet. Ten minutes later decks rang with pounding feet and the cries of CPOs and officers filled the air.

"If we can only get to the *Prinz Eugen*—" Paolucci began.

"We can't go anywhere we're not dragged," Rossetti whispered back. "We can't pick a course." Then an idea came to him; he suddenly remembered a "last-resort" maneuver he'd thought out in the early stages of the manned-torpedo experiment, but which he'd discarded when his growing confidence told him there could be no failure. Rossetti fiddled with some valves and a length of flexible copper tubing on the torpedo's side, sticking one end of the tube into the metal canister containing the dynamite. He turned the valve, and compressed air went into the barrel.

"We don't want them to know a damn thing about this torpedo," Rossetti whis-

pered. "As soon as I free the warhead, turn the immersion valve on your side."

Less than a minute later the warhead, now buoyant, went floating off, and once Paolucci turned the designated valve the torpedo sank from view, and went on to the bottom. The two frogmen then began swimming for shore.

But by now the gray dawn had become considerably lighter, and as they swam along there was a sudden yell from a look-out on one of the ships. Several slugs hit the water around them before they heard the shots. They'd been spotted, and there was no use doing anything but treading water and waiting.

Yells came from the decks of ships all around them now, and suddenly a four-oared gig pulled away from the accommodation ladder of a nearby vessel. But the gig didn't reach them; a patrol boat dashed around the stern of the *Radetzky*, backwatered fiercely as it pulled up to them, and at gunpoint the two men were hauled aboard. The boat raced off at full speed, and a few minutes later whipped up to the accommodation ladder of one of the capital ships.

It was the *Viribus Unitis*, to which Rossetti had attached a warhead set to blow up at 6:30!

Once aboard the warship, the two frogmen, who'd revealed they were Italian officers, were brought before Captain Ianko Vukovic de Podkapelski for questioning. Eyeing their rubber suits, he knew they'd been up to some destructive mission, but what, he couldn't imagine. It did no good to question the frogmen, who speculatively eyed the clock as it moved from 5:40 to 6:00 to 6:10.

At last Rossetti broke his silence. He was grateful to the captain, who could have had them taken out and summarily shot since they were not in any recognizable uniform. "Sir—let me urge you to get your men off this ship as quickly as possible. There's a mine attached to her hull—and you've only twenty minutes left." It was too late, of course, to search for the warhead, so the captain had to take the men's word for it.

He instantly barked commands over his telephone, ordering all boats and rafts lowered. It was typical of the man that he called the engine room first, which was the most dangerous spot at the moment, and the bridge where the officers were, last. The two Italians, the captain, and his exec were still in the captain's quarters at 6:28.

"You'd better take the prisoners out onto deck," Vukovic told his exec. By this time Rossetti had told him all about their manned-torpedo and how they had brought it through the multiple defenses. "They are—though we might not like it—men of great courage."

Six twenty-nine. They hurried out onto deck, but there was such a crowding of sailors for the boats that they couldn't get through. Rossetti pulled out his watch, the waterproofed one by which he'd timed the bomb. 6:30.

Nothing happened.

Nor did anything happen at 6:35 as they finally got to a boat and pulled away. Failure, Rossetti cursed. After all they had gone through. But suddenly there was a dull boom off to the starboard, and they saw flames leaping from a warship half a mile away.

"The *Wien*!" someone shouted, and Rossetti knew that the free-floating warhead he'd made buoyant had found its mark in one of Austria's finest cruisers.

It was *something*, at any rate.

But there was one more surprise to come, for suddenly there was a concussion, a boom, and a splash of flame as the *Viribus Unitis* belched smoke. Rossetti sighed. The timer may have been late—but it had worked. Men around them cried as the pride of the Austrian navy heaved, settled on its side, fell on its beam and sank slowly by the bow.

With her went Captain Vukovic, who had saved their lives.

Twelve days later came the Armistice, and after the two prisoners-of-war were returned to Italy they were paraded through Rome as national heroes, and given their country's highest honors. The men felt that they had truly restored Italy's name to a place of honor among the nations of the world.

Rossetti was brought before King Victor Emmanuel III to whom he personally recounted his exploits in Pola Harbor. For his heroic service to his country, the King awarded Rossetti a gift of 650,000 *lira*.

Two days later, the gallant frogman boarded a train for Austria. Making his way to Vienna, Captain Rossetti located the widow of Captain Vukovic, the skipper who had gone down with his ship, the *Viribus Unitis*. Telling the grieving woman who he was, Rossetti then paid tribute to the man who saved his life—he gave his 650,000 *lira* to the widow of Captain Vukovic, the enemy who had been his friend. **END**

MISTRESS OF THE SUNDANCE KID

(Continued from page 21)

really noticeable. "Hi, Bub!" he told the startled waiter. "What's a fella do to get some fodder around here?"

A half hour later the smiling young man glanced up and saw a handsome couple entering the restaurant. The man was perhaps an inch taller than he: five eight or nine, but his slenderness, coupled with the silk top hat he sported, made him appear closer to six feet. He too wore a well-tailored Prince Albert and his trousers were a pearl and gray stripe, and below them his shoes were narrow and pointed. The man had an alert face with burning eyes and a small, neat mus-

tache which accentuated a slightly hawk-like nose. On his arm was a lovely girl of about 27. "Good God!" said the man at the table under his breath.

When the newcomers spotted him the man waved off the *maitre d'* and came toward his table, the tall man smiling and the girl looking beautiful and demure, but with her brown eyes alive with interest.

"Why Jim Ryan!" said her companion shifting his gloves and cane to the left hand and extending the other.

The blond man stood up smiling even more broadly. "Mr. Place!"

When they had shaken hands the man turned to the girl and said: "My dear, this is Mr. James Ryan. Jim—I'd like you to meet my wife, Etta!"

For only an instant the blond man's smile sagged as he stared at the brunette, and then he recovered. "Why how nice! How very nice . . . So this is Mrs. Place! Why, doggone you, Harry. This sure comes as a surprise! Sit down!"

It had come as a surprise, all right. He sat there talking with the two, but his mind wasn't on discussions about New York weather. His mind was on the girl, and on what it would mean to his plans: If she wasn't Harry's wife, why in hell had Harry introduced her that way?

He smiled and got up. "Mrs. Place, I wonder if you'll excuse me and Harry here. We gotta pick out a couple of good cigars."

Harry looked up surprised. "We can order 'em," he said.

"Nope, Harry. Can't trust them waiters—not here. C'mon."

But he didn't walk to the cigar counter. He walked in to the men's room and, after making sure they were alone, turned to his friend. "Okay, Sundance. What the hell's all this about?"

The Sundance Kid grinned. "I told you, Butch. She's my wife."

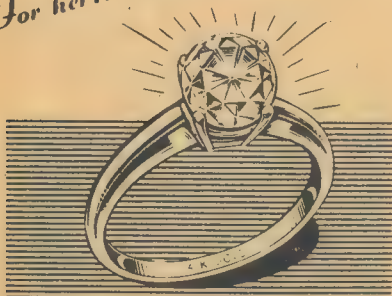
"All legal and like?"

"Well . . . not legal. But don't go

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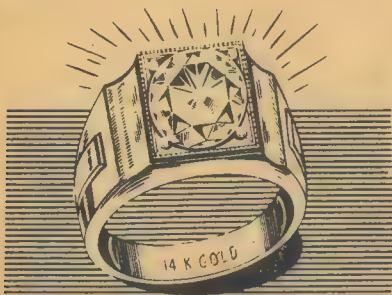
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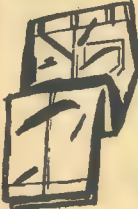
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getting Etta wrong. She ain't none of Fanny Porter's meat. This girl's real class. She was even a schoolteacher once!"

"A schoolteacher!" said Butch Cassidy flabbergasted. "What the hell kind of a hairpin is that to bring around? Are you forgetting—we're sailing for South America in three weeks!"

"When we do, Etta's going with us," said the Sundance Kid.

"Like hell she is!" Butch said, his eyes narrowing. "What are you trying to do—queer this deal?" He looked at Sundance, who stared back angrily. "Look bucko—we're one step ahead of the law and those nosy Pinkertons. Back home the Hole-in-the-Wall gang is just something people talk about now. Lonny Logan's gone, Flat Nose Curry, Harry Tracy, Sam Ketchum—all stiff with bullets in them. But you and me—living high off the hog in New York City, with twenty thousand each and tickets for Argentina in our wallets—and you're willing to dump it all for a fancy skirt. Like hell you will!"

"Like hell I won't!" said the Sundance Kid. "I'm saying this just once more—like it or lump it: Either she goes, or I stay!"

"Why?" said Butch exasperated.

Harry Longbaugh, the Sundance Kid, looked at him steadily. "Butch, you never been much for the gals. You're all business—all brains and fight. But I ain't cut that way. I don't like sleeping alone. But it's even more this time. I'm just plain stuck on Etta. Ever since I first laid eyes on her, I was stuck fast. I just can't go without her, Butch."

Butch Cassidy looked at the man who'd been his pal through countless gunfights and robberies and chases by the law. He knew Harry Longbaugh's worth. Without him their plan to hole up in South America was out the window. He couldn't let it happen just because of some fancy jane, no matter who she might be. He rubbed his broad chin, then laughed. "Okay, guess she goes."

"Thanks, Butch," the Sundance Kid said relaxing. "Lissen, you won't have no cause to regret it. She's a good kid. Etta's no chippy."

"She's not stupid, partner. She's loaded upstairs. Smart as you, almost. And she keeps her mouth shut, too."

"Just who is she, anyway?" said Butch. "I mean—really?"

Harry shrugged, laughing. "Who knows?"

"You mean to tell me you don't know that?"

"That's what I mean. She won't tell me anything. Except that she's twenty-seven and was a schoolteacher, and that she's willing to stick by me. That's all. Far as I know she was born just like I found her: full-grown and pretty as hell. Just like that!"

"Well, I'll be hanged," said Butch Cassidy shaking his head.

During their 20 days in New York Mr. & Mrs. Harry D. Place and Mr. Jim Ryan stayed in a respectable boarding-house run by a Mrs. Taylor on West 12th Street. The brownstone remained their comfortable hideout while they enjoyed the city pleasures.

On one sightseeing trip around the city the Sundance Kid and his mistress saw a photographer's parlor and stopped to immortalize the occasion with a full-length, formal pose. (Three months later, while canvassing photographers, the Pinkertons would hit De Young's Studio at Broadway, near Grace Church. There they would get their first glimpse of the mysterious beauty who was to become

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On the morning of February 20, 1901, the fashionable trio boarded the *S.S. Soldier Prince*. They made a fine family group as they stood at the rail watching the skyline of the city—and the power of American law—disappear in the distance.

On a nice, sunny day in March, 1901, Mr. & Mrs. Harry D. Place and their smiling, jovial companion, Mr. Jim Ryan, debarked in Buenos Aires and checked into the swank Hotel Europa. Shortly after, Mr. Place, acting as treasurer, banked over 12,000 gold notes at the London and Platte River Bank, where the president personally attended the "distinguished American gentleman" whose charming wife and friend stood close by laughing and joking with the clerks.

"My, my," said Mr. Ryan. "What a fancy safe you folks have there. Is that where our money's going? I must have a good look at it," and he winked roguishly. "Who knows . . . I might want to rob it someday!"

It was just about the funniest thing the bank president and his clerks had ever heard, and they said so amid gales of laughter. "Mr. Ryan sure is a card, isn't he, sir?" said the president delighted.

"He sure is," agreed Mr. Place. "Cagey businessman, too. If you don't watch him, he'll have all your money one of these days."

"Well, we like that kind of go-getter here," said the happy, tubby man. "We're growing with the city, you know. Lots and lots of business coming to Buenos Aires from the United States these days. Lots of folks like you. And lots of German and English people who know a good thing when they see it. Of course," he said confidentially, "one can't keep all the riffraff out . . ."

Mr. Place nodded understandingly. "We'd heard a number of bad parties had jumped the law up north and hid out here."

"A few dozen, sir. Not much more. But never fear. There's a law here, too. Your money's safe with this bank!"

"Say, Mr. Place," said the smiling Mr. Ryan. "You might ask this gentleman where we can find the land office. I might want to rob that, too!"

"Ah, you are a card! Don't deny it, sir!" said the convulsed bank president.

Mr. Ryan had no intentions of denying it, and when the man had finally stopped laughing sufficiently to point to a building across the street, the charming trio left. "So long," said Mr. Ryan. "And say—don't take any wooden nickels, folks!" That was just about the funniest thing Buenos Aires had ever heard.

When the trio left the government land office the Sundance Kid had in his pocket an approved application for "Four square leagues in Cholilo, Province of Chubut, *Distrito 16 de Octubre*." From Buenos Aires the popular, much admired Americans took a coastal steamer south to Bahia Blanca, and from there they took the semi-monthly boat to Rawson. There they hired mules and Indians and reached their new land in May. In three and a half months they put 12,000 miles between them and the U. S. Law. "Now let the damn Pinkertons figure out where we are," said the Sundance Kid happily.

It was quickly noticed that Mr. Place and his friend, Mr. Ryan, knew something about cattle. "Why, sure we do!" Mr. Ryan admitted to their new neighbor, the popular dentist for the growing American-Argentine colony, Dr. Newberry. "We should—we rustled enough of them, didn't we, Harry?"

Not only Dr. Newberry, but the entire colony, was delighted with the affable new arrivals. Mr. Ryan was charming. Mr. Place was obviously quite rich, and Mrs. Place was cultured and beautiful. Many of the colony's prominent members knew that Place and Ryan had already started a ranch adjacent to Dr. Newberry's ranch, stocking it with 1,300 fat sheep.



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500 head of sleek cattle, and 35 excellent horses. An impressive start for two "retired businessmen" who only wanted a small spread to keep them occupied. Meanwhile the three newcomers met bankers, miners and all sorts of businessmen, and if they took particular interest in the bankers, it was never noticed. But although on the surface Sundance was still the genial gent, underneath he was becoming bored and uneasy. "I can't take any more of this!" he exploded one night at home. "I need some action!"

Butch stopped unbuttoning his vest and looked at his pal. They were alone. Etta was in her room. "I think I do, too," he said. "But what about Etta?"

"She's as bored as we are."

"Well, I ain't risking no girl's neck in something that's strictly men's work," Butch snapped. "Neither would you—if you . . ."

"So that's it!" said Harry starting to laugh. "By God—you gone sweet on her!"

"You're a damn liar!" said Butch madder than he'd ever been in his life.

Harry wasn't laughing anymore. "You and I have been pals for a long time, but you better sorry-up fast and loud—or go for your gun—because I ain't taking that from nobody!"

"Then you can reach whenever you're ready," said Butch inching his shoulder holster forward with his elbow.

For an instant the two measured each other, then a cool voice said, "The first one who goes for a gun gets a bullet right through his bowler!" Butch turned in amazement, but Harry didn't bother. He knew what Butch would see. It was the beautiful Etta holding a tiny, nicked and engraved stingy-gun—its two barrels aimed directly between them.

She smiled then. "Thank you for your attention, Butch. But as Harry was explaining: I'm quite capable of taking care of myself."

"I see that," Butch replied. "You not only palm a derringer like a card-sharp, but eavesdrop as well . . ."

"Let's say I keep posted," she said. "And now, will you two wildcats stop playing western badmen over me?"

Butch began to laugh again. "If I don't beat all for a dumbbell!" he said. "Me worrying about Etta, and all this time she's packing a pistol in her bonnet!"

"Not in my bonnet," she said with a smile as Sundance began to laugh, too. Then, as the two friends shook hands the beautiful girl turned discreetly to hide her tiny gun somewhere in her petticoat . . .

It was the start of a new and active part for Etta in the hard, dangerous life of banditry as practiced by Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. As Butch watched with admiration she was cook, lookout and camp-follower. She rode night and day, applied her practical mind to planning future robberies, shared Harry's blanket and never complained.

At last their plans were set and their scouting of the land finished. They sold their ranch and stock, added the money to their account in the Buenos Aires bank, and then Butch and Sundance told everyone they were going "north on business for a few months."

Early one day a week later, a well-dressed man in a silk top hat strolled into the bank of an Argentine city and asked to see the president. Behind him had entered another well-attired young man who wore a bowler hat at a jaunty angle and whose broad jaw was the dominant feature of a happy, smiling face.

When the president presented himself with a bow and a polite: "Yes, gentlemen?" the man in the top hat removed his gloves, bent forward and whispered: "Are you certain you're the president?"

"Why-why certainly, sir!"

"This bank is very stable," the man continued. "I mean, you have plenty of money?"

"Yes, of course. If you wish to open an account . . ."

"No," said the man. "I came to warn you—you're about to be robbed!"

"Good heavens!" said the president. "How do you know this?"

"Well, you see," the Sundance Kid told him. "We're the ones who are going to do it." And as the man gasped the Kid and Butch drew guns from under their coats and Sundance opened a straight razor and put it to the banker's throat. Butch thought it was all very funny, and he was still laughing as he and Sundance walked out with the contents of the safe.

Around the corner Etta sat in a stolen surrey. Butch saw with pride that she wasn't at all scared. *She ain't like nobody I ever met in my life*, he said to himself. *Not like nobody. I don't even like to think of her being hurt . . .*

The new, daringly-conceived series of holdups hit Argentina like lightning. Banks, mines and gold-carrying mule caravans were hit by the phantom bandits who then vanished. All anyone could say was that there were three of them: two who entered the vaults were big, husky men. The third, who stayed outside as lookout and horse-tender, was small and delicate. Maybe a kid. Their clothes depended on the job. Sometimes they appeared in expensive city clothes, sometimes in the big hats and boots of the *yanqui* western bandits, and then they carried their big guns slung on belts and repeating rifles on their saddles. When they talked, they talked like *americanos*. But there were many *norte americanos* in Argentina and neighboring Brazil. Many of them were gamblers, fortune-hunters and wanted men. It might be any of these whom the Argentine police sought.

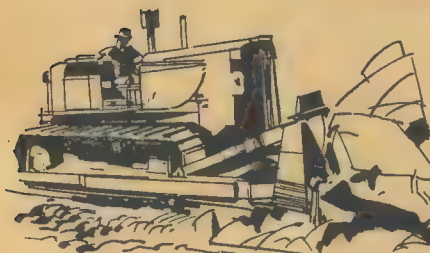
One noticeable trait of one of the bandits was that he seemed to love children, for everywhere the trio struck the children in the streets had been given pieces of candy by a "nice, smiling, blond *gringo* . . ." The second bandit was taller and dark and somewhat vicious. The third no one ever saw up close . . .

In a way Butch was happy again. Banditry in the Argentines was everything it had been in the Wild West before the wireless, telephones, organized law-enforcement and the damned Pinkertons had screwed it up. What was more, Etta could ride and shoot with the best. You could count on her when the chips were down. When the ranchers or *soldados* formed a posse and chased them her Winchester rifle and little .32 Merwin & Hulbert pearl-handled five-shooter proved as deadly as Butch's or the Kid's. Butch could scarcely look at her without wishing that he—not Harry—had met her first. She was all woman—and all Harry's.

They'd been riding as a gang for two years now; two years since they'd deserted the comparatively easy, safe job of ranching for their dangerous first love—armed robbery. In the coolness of a jungle patch Butch sat on a big gray mule, a Montana-peaked Stetson and high-lace boots completing the miner's outfit he wore. Beside him, holding a pack mule and sitting a smaller, white animal, Etta waited silently. Then they heard a short

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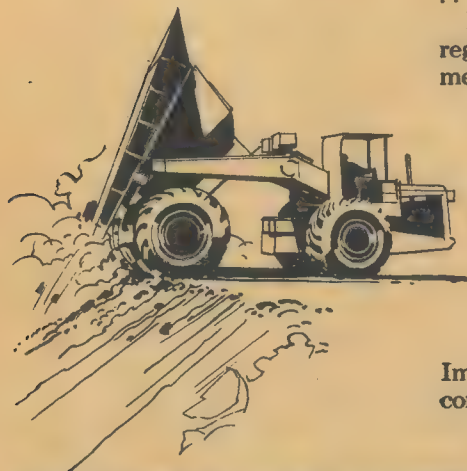
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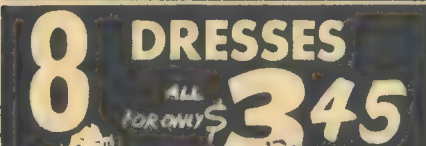


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bird-like whistle. The two looked at each other. "The Kid's in place," Butch said.

She smiled wanly. He could see that she looked a bit tired, although still beautiful in her outlaw disguise. "It won't be long now, will it Butch?" she asked him in her soft, low voice.

"No. Not long. They should be by any minute. You ready?"

"Yes," she said sadly.

He looked at her and cupped her small chin in his rough hands. For weeks Butch had been working for one of the American-operated mines, learning everything he could about their gold-shipping schedules, and now . . . "You don't like it," he said to her. "You don't, I see it. Look, Etta . . . just say the word and it's all off."

She shook her head silently. "No. It's something Harry wants." Then she looked into his eyes as she'd never looked at him before. "You're kind and cheerful, Butch, and you think about what's good for me," she said to him. "Harry's not that way. He's selfish, and there's a certain measure of vulgarity in him which you don't have. Despite your reputation as a terror you're really quite moral—and quite good. I noticed that right away when I met you. I knew that you didn't want me along—I mean, in this kind of life . . ."

"You're a nice girl, Etta—educated and beautiful. Why did you . . . why did you have to . . ." He bit his lip till he tasted blood.

"Why did I become Harry's girl? Why did you become a bandit? I don't really know. I guess when you love someone you try to overlook his faults. You want only to be near him."

"Yeah, I guess you do," Butch replied quietly. "Listen . . ." he said suddenly. Somewhere through the jungle came the sounds of voices and of the hoofs of many pack mules. Butch pulled the rifle from his saddle-boot and jumped to the ground handing Etta the reins. He looked up at her. "I can still call it off . . ." But she only shook her head. Then he smiled at her and ducked into the bushes, running low.

Beyond the edge of jungle where Etta waited with the pack animal and Butch's mount there was a clearing of several hundred yards, and flanking the trail there a small outcropping of rock jutted up like a pile of granite, and just below it a clear, cool pool of fresh water lay still and mirror-like. In the rocks above the pool the Sundance Kid waited with his rifle, knowing the packers would stop below to fill their canteens. Two hundred yards east, along the trail and at the jungle's edge, Butch Cassidy lay on the damp ground, his Winchester cocked and ready.

They came by slowly, the mules heavily packed and walking two-by-two, while their drivers rode forward and behind with half a dozen Indians walking placidly at intervals beside the column. There were 18 mules and three white men with rifles, riding mule-back. When the head of the mule team reached the pool the end of the column had just cleared the point where Butch waited. He looked up and saw Harry jump up, rifle raised. Then the mule-drivers began to dismount, and at that point the Sundance Kid slipped and fell forward, his rifle going off. "Ambush! Ambush!" cried one of the packers grabbing his rifle. Butch jumped up firing at the mule under the man, and the animal snorted and fell back pinning the startled packer under it. Harry was on his feet fast and blazing

away scattering the Indians. The other white men promptly threw their rifles down and raised their hands. "Don't shoot!" cried one of them. "The boss is hurt—don't shoot!" Butch leaped forward running low, and Harry scrambled down from the rocks cursing a blue streak. Butch looked at him angrily, but said nothing. "All right, hombres," he told the two packers. "Get 'im out from under that mule, but don't get funny with his rifle."

Harry began yelling angrily. "I oughta kill every one of you!" His left arm was bleeding badly where a sharp rock had sliced right through his sleeve and gashed him.

The two bandits knew just where the gold was. Inside the big bags of flour and rice which the mules carried, along with parts for machines, beans and coffee, the entire mine payroll was hidden in smaller leather bags. Part was in gold coin, part in bills. While the fuming Kid watched the injured man and his companions, Butch went right to the flour and rice, ripping the bags open.

The three men watched him closely. Then one said, "You knowed pretty good where it was, didn't you, mister?" "You want a bullet in your craw?" Harry asked venomously. When no one answered he said, "Where's your medical stuff?"

"We don't have none, mister," their boss groaned. "Think I'd be a-layin' here like this effen we did? My leg's broke!"

"I'm right sorry about that," said Butch. "But I couldn't let you go shooting holes in my stupid pardner."

"You might just as well killed me," the man said. "In this climate infection's in quicker'n a man can wink."

"You're pals'll get you to the mine in time," Butch said.

"If I had my way about it," Sundance shouted, "I'd fill your bellies with lead frijoles. Look at my arm!"

He was still cursing as he rode into the jungle with Butch riding piggyback behind him. Etta was waiting anxiously, having heard the shooting. "Harry," she said pleadingly. "You didn't—?"

"Naw, I didn't kill anybody!" he snorted. "But look at me!"

Butch dismounted calmly. "Better get back to that pool and wash that wound with plenty of tar soap," he told the Kid. "We got maybe two, maybe three hours before the *soldados* come looking for us. Then Injun boys run like rabbits, and they'll head right for the law . . ."

When the miners had taken the mules and their companion away, the Kid mounted and rode back to the pool. There were three canteens in the group, but these had to be kept full for travel.

For a long while after the Kid was gone, Butch sat silently checking the bags he'd taken from the caravan. Etta sat beside him on the cool jungle floor. Finally he looked up, and his eyes seemed troubled. "Etta," he said. "I ain't no good at talking . . . but . . ."

She wasn't one to duck an issue. "Are you going to ask me to leave Harry and go with you, Butch?" She smiled sympathetically.

"I'm that easy to see through, eh?"

"I can't do it, Butch. As you'd put it—I'm stuck on him."

"I guess that's what I like about you," he told her sadly. "But remember: long as I'm alive I'm looking after you. Nobody ain't going to hurt you nor do you dirt so long as I can lift a finger. Not even Harry. And you can tell him that,

(Continued on page 64)

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if you want to. I don't care if he knows!"

Long after they had taken the trail they saw the troop of mounted *soldados* far below, crossing the clearing where they had held up the mule train. Butch turned in his saddle and smiled at the girl. "We got chuck for a week on that mule there. They can hunt till their faces turn blue," he told her. "Now, let's see what Bolivia looks like this time of year . . ." and he began to laugh. Inside he was worried. *She don't look well*, he thought. *She don't look well at all . . .*

In Buenos Aires the big light-complexioned man who was Chief of Police sat at his desk looking across at a small, neat man in front of him. The little man, an American, looked like a cross between a bank manager and a shoe clerk in his stiff, glistening celluloid collar. His name was Frank Daimio, and far from being the mild little clerk he appeared to be, he was one of the Pinkerton's greatest detectives.

"Well?" said Daimio leaning back patiently.

The big Argentine took two photographs and held them up again, nodding pensively. "*Bueno, señor*. Among these five gentlemen I recognize *Señor James Ryan*, and this other is a likeness of Mr. and Mrs. Harry D. Place, Dr. Newberry's charming American neighbors."

The Pinkerton man smiled. "That's how Dr. Newberry and the president of the London and Platte River Bank identified them, too. The unhappy fact is, however, that those five 'gentlemen' are not gentlemen at all. That's a photograph of the notorious Hole-in-the-Wall gang, also known as The Wild Bunch, and Mr. James Ryan was their leader, Butch Cassidy, alias George Leroy Parker . . ."

"I can scarcely believe it!" said the astonished official.

"You'll believe it even less when I tell you that your 'charming' Mr. Place is none other than the notorious Sundance Kid, Harry Longbough, Cassidy's lieutenant."

"Then the lady is *not* Mrs. Place?"

"Not legally. She's Etta Place, his common-law wife. And that's *all* we know about her. Except that she must be the 'boy' reported in all your robberies." The little man sat back again, with a sigh. "I wish I could stay to see the end of the story," he said, "but unfortunately I'm on another assignment. My advice is to have posters made and distributed as widely as possible. Send them into the interior, to every village and army outpost, perhaps even to Bolivia. Meanwhile, I've already tied up their funds at the local bank. The rains are coming. They'll have to hole up somewhere, and when they come out again they'll be desperate for money. I know these people. I know how wildly they gamble and spend. When they find out they can't come back here for money, they'll get reckless. They'll make mistakes. . . . One of those may prove *quite fatal*. . . ."

Early one morning after the rains had gone, a trio rode into a squalid little town in southern Bolivia. To the casual observer they appeared to be *americanos*—probably cattlemen on a buying trip, or foremen-paymasters from one of the many nearby mines. One was tall and handsome, with a fine dark mustache. The second was stocky and powerful, with a perpetually-smiling face and a prominent jaw. The third was just a peach-skinned boy, slender and delicate as a girl in his loose-fitting denims and

flannel shirt. The boy led a big, gray mule which seemed loaded for a long trip. It wasn't particularly unusual. Passing the barracks, before which the *soldados* stood bargaining with a vendor, and some children played at tossing pebbles into a circle drawn on the dirt street, the big-jawed *americano* waved at the soldiers, who waved back. From one of his saddlebags he took a handful of candies and calling to the children, tossed the sweets high into the air to the delight of the *niños* who scrambled madly for them. Some of the *soldados* nodded. "*Que buen hombre!*" said one. "What a nice man!" The Bolivians liked people who liked children.

But one soldier, a sergeant, suddenly froze, then recovering he ducked into the commandant's office to check on something he had seen—or read—some weeks before. By the time he and the *capitan* had run out the *americanos* were out of sight. Their horses and the mule were tied up before the local express office, a square, thick-walled, one-storied adobe structure surrounded by an earthen wall some six feet high. The building and wall were separated by perhaps 50 feet of open space. The tiny *pueblo* was tranquil, the office was still preparing a large payroll for a neighboring mine. The *americanos* were two doors away, eating peacefully at Doña Carvajal's modest little restaurant.

"*Sargento*, are you sure of your facts?" the captain demanded.

"*Absolutamente, mi capitan!* One was big, one stocky, the other very small. Small as a girl. And with my own eyes I saw the smiling one throwing candy to the children!"

The officer nodded, glancing at a poster he held. "It's all here. He loves *niños*. And the others . . . But, *demonio!* It's no crime to love children! And if we are wrong—"

There was a commotion from the dusty street at that moment, and the two men turned to see a private running toward them. "*Mi capitan! Mi capitan!*" he called excitedly. "That gray mule over there—I know it! It was the animal carrying the bags of gold in that Sierra Brava Mine robbery!"

"Are you *sure*?" said the officer collar-ing him.

"*Si, señor*. I would know it anywhere. I helped pack it. Besides, it has the mine's brand and a large machete cut on its left foreleg. I just saw them myself, this moment, *mi capitan!*"

The officer and sergeant looked at each other uncertainly, then the captain licked his lips. "Well, that does it! Order the company to arms immediately."

Butch finished his coffee and looked at Harry who was lighting a cigar. There was no talk. Butch drew his two .45 Colts, kept them under the table, and gave each cylinder a turn, carefully spotting each round through the small gates. When Sundance had finished checking his pistols the two waited for Etta. She looked over the small, double-action guns, packing each one into the Mexican-styled holsters she wore on her shapely thighs, then she nodded and they all got up. "Harry," she said softly. "I don't want to do this one."

"You crazy?" he whispered angrily. "There's twenty thousand in gold in that mud hut."

"I don't care! Please, Harry . . ." she pleaded.

The Sundance Kid was annoyed, but Butch said, "If she doesn't want to do it, we don't do it!"



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"All right," said the Kid. "I'll take it alone." He had calculated right. Etta would never let him take the risk by himself. Butch knew there was no use arguing. Anyway, everything looked fine in that sleepy, little town.

They walked out slowly, as they had done hundreds of times, and Butch's keen eyes surveyed the street. He was calm, unemotional, the perfect leader. He took in the entire scurvy assortment of mud, tin and clapboard huts which made up the town. About the soldiers he had no worries. He knew it usually took them and their indecisive officers ages to get organized.

At the hitching rail Butch took Etta's tiny hand. He winked and grinned.

"Butch, I'm frightened," she whispered despite the Kid's angry look. "I have the most horrible premonition . . ."

Butch winked, reassuringly. "We'll be right out. You'll see."

She mounted, and while Butch and Harry walked to the express office across the yard, she brought the two mounts and the pack-mule along, then stood waiting as Butch and Harry pulled their neckerchiefs over their faces, drew their guns and went in.

"Okay—*manos arriba!*" Butch said in his best Spanish. "Get 'em up, kiddos!" The clerks, completely surprised, threw their hands up, scattering money over everything. "I ain't never had to kill a man yet," said Butch half-jokingly, "but don't nobody get funny, *sabe?*"

They all understood, except for the head clerk who went for a rifle on the wall. Harry, without batting an eye, dropped him with a slug through the head.

It was the fatal error. Outside Etta suddenly screamed, "Butch!" "Harry!" and went for her guns. All along the adobe wall across the yard a line of armed soldiers appeared. "Fuego!" cried the captain lowering his sabre. The volley rang out like a crash of thunder and Etta threw her arms over her face. As her small body was slammed over backwards by the smashing bullets, her horse bolted with a frightened cry.

On the flanks two platoons under the *sargento* poured over the walls, quickly forming like two huge firing squads; half the men kneeling, half standing in the dirt yard. Twenty rifles were aimed at the only door to the express office, the rest pointed at all the windows. Harry, nearest the door dashed out crying: "Etta! Etta!"

"Fuego!" came the sergeant's command. The platoons fired as one, the bullets kicking up dirt, knocking chunks of mud off the walls, and smashing Harry's body against the doorway.

Butch saw Harry bounce, then crawl forward before dropping for good. He ducked, trying to rush out, but the group in front saw him and opened up a stiff fire which drove him back, momentarily blinded by flying door splinters and chips of mud. Inside the clerks were shouting for help, crawling around under the desks. Then Butch saw Etta under the hoofs of her wounded horse. Even from here he could see she was already dead, her once beautiful body riddled with bullets, her shirt half off, her thick, brown hair crusted with muddy blood.

"Fuego! Fuego!" shouted the captain. The doorway seemed to disintegrate and the mule and Harry's horse jumped and broke loose. Etta's soft body jumped sluggishly under the full impact of 20 Mauser bullets as the soldiers poured another volley into her. Butch's dead

horse, near which Harry had fallen, quivered violently, and the white dust flew. Then he saw Harry move. Harry was still alive. "Butch . . ." he called feebly. "Butch . . . help Etta. Help her, Butch . . ."

Butch called, "I'm coming out to get you, Kid!"

"No. No use, pard. I'm done. But help Etta . . ."

Butch raised his pistols and opened up on the soldiers to the front. He knew they were too far, and the sergeant's platoons might be easier, but he didn't care. "You swine!" he shouted. "I've never wanted to kill before. But I'm going to kill now!" He was blind with anger, and his shots were scattered as he emptied his guns at them. *There's a Winchester on my saddle*, he thought. Harry had one, too, but his horse had bolted to die 20 yards away. Etta's animal was running around, crazy with pain and fear, spewing dark blood from its neck, legs and belly. The mule held their extra ammunition and food for the getaway. *There'll be no getaway now!* he thought bitterly. "Harry," he yelled. "Can you reach my Winchester?"

"I can't move, pard. Can't even feel my legs."

At that moment the captain again shouted: "Fuego!" and as the terrible volley struck, Harry screamed, jerked himself up a few inches off the ground, then slowly slipped over to one side, moved once, and then was still.

Butch didn't finish reloading. "You dirty butchers!" he screamed feeling hot tears of rage and frustration pouring down his face.

"Fuego!" cried the sergeant, and another volley roared out. Butch got to his feet, the pistols leveled, his gray eyes blinded with dust and tears. "Why don't you leave 'em alone! They're dead! Leave 'em alone, you lousy butchers! What are you trying to do?"

Screaming hoarsely, scarcely thinking, he ran out, laying down a furious barrage of bullets, killing nine of the *sargento's* men. At Harry's body Butch stopped and looked down. Harry's face was almost completely shot away. Etta was worse. Four fusillades and a panicked animal trampling on her had turned the beautiful girl into a pitiful, unrecognizable sight. He screamed with insane hate.

Throwing his Colts down he began tugging at the Winchester, but the dead animal lay on the scabbard. "Fuego! Pronto, fuego!" yelled the hoarse, excited captain leaping onto the wall.

The rain of bullets struck everything, living and dead. Butch folded up in the middle as his legs gave way under him, and he fell stiffly to his knees. He felt sick and stunned. Across the yard near the wall, he dimly saw the platoons reforming. The *sargento*, pistol in hand, had kicked his soldiers to their unwilling feet, and was urging them on for the kill. Butch hopped to one leg, blood streaming from half a dozen wounds. His ears sang shrilly and he lacked even the strength with which to yell. With agonizing deliberation he managed to pump a shell into the rifle's chamber. Tottering weakly he turned as both sergeant and captain raised their hands to signal their men. He never heard the last commands. In the savage roar which followed, the awful force of the combined volleys struck him as he tried to squeeze the trigger. It almost tore him to pieces and he was dead before he hit the ground.

END



The BIG FAT FLAME

We were stuck in the busy mid-Manhattan street. Behind us the traffic piled bumper to bumper, horns screeching indignantly. The colonel leaned over to our cab driver. "What's wrong?" he asked.

The cabbie pointed with his cigarette to the car in front, "Look."

We did. The car ahead of us—a shiny 1959 model—had stalled and the starter clattered endlessly with that empty metallic sound that you know in advance is not going to make the motor catch. Twisting the ignition key in helpless fury, the unfortunate motorist at the same time was exchanging uncomplimentary opinions with the drivers of the vehicles snarled behind him. At length he piled out of the car, wrenched at the hood, and looked fiercely at the inert engine. To no one in particular, but as though to vindicate himself to his tormenters, he shouted: "I just know it's those damned spark plugs. Only two thousand miles and already they're shot!"

Started, I turned to my companion. "Colonel," I demanded, "is this a plant?" He stared back at me, then he got it and he began to laugh. So did I, in a moment, and there we were in this taxicab, stalled between skyscrapers and going no place, roaring as though we'd never stop.

Spark plugs! That was the joke. The colonel and I were on our way to his downtown office where I was scheduled to interview him for a magazine story. The subject—spark plugs.

You see, Col. Fred Dollenberg is the inventor and manufacturer of a device which is designed to allow automobiles to run without spark plugs!

Later, sitting in his top floor office, with the drapes parted to reveal the exciting lower Manhattan skyline, I got a more leisurely look at the colonel. I wondered and asked about his smashed nose,—the war maybe?—and he smiled and said no, just an opposing tackle with a very hard head. Dollenberg was an All-American mention at St. Joseph's in Philadelphia before he joined the Army Air Force as an engineer immediately after graduation. After war was declared against Japan and Germany, he saw enough action to later receive the Inquirer Hero Award as Philadelphia's most decorated flyer, succeeding a similar award to Marine hero Al (Pride of the Marines) Schmid. For a time he was personal pilot for Gen. Douglas MacArthur. Evidently there was considerable brilliance to this young fighter; he started the climb up to the brain brass, and some of the military manuals he was charged with preparing are still used by the Air Force. (Only part of this did I drag out of Dollenberg. Indeed it was a newspaper file which informed me that the colonel was a triple ace!)

It was while Dollenberg was in command of a task force of seasoned P-40 pilots that a grim incident took place which set the then Capt. Dollenberg off on his restless search for perfection. A young ace, coming in safe and sound from a mission where he had gone through murderous enemy fire, never made it to his safe hut a few hundred yards away. He nosed a bit too low—no engine power to get the plane up quickly—and the trees that lay just short of the runway

As told to Harry Mayer
by Colonel Fred P. Dollenberg

caught the plane and pilot and crashed both. Dollenberg was horrified at the accident and at the paralysis of fatalism that seemed to settle on the shoulders of officers and enlisted men alike in the face of a tragedy so senseless. . . . After all, it seemed to say, it is true, isn't it, that more planes are lost through engine failure than are brought down by the Japs? You had to expect such things—and accept them. . . . But Dollenberg couldn't accept it. Not when the cause of this type of accident could be ripped out of the engine.

"Plug failure?" I asked. He nodded, shortly. "This tragedy and others, too. Too many others. Did you know that spark plugs were invented more than 40 years ago for engines whose limit was 20 miles an hour? These very same spark plugs—and that they haven't been changed an iota since? Can you imagine a 2000 horsepower motor depending for ignition on a skinny little spark that had been intended to help



"The spark plug was invented more than 40 years ago. For the last 20 years it has not been doing an adequate job. The U. S. Navy and Air Force knew this only too well. I was commissioned to replace the spark plug with a modern efficient ignition system. I succeeded—with the Lectra Fuel Igniter. The Navy accepted it and took the spark plugs out of their aircraft replacing them with the prototype of our Lectra Fuel Igniter. Today this extraordinary invention is replacing spark plugs in tens of thousands of automobiles throughout the country. By 1961 every car made will carry fuel igniters not spark plugs" . . . Col. Fred P. Dollenberg, U. S. Air Force, from a speech at the Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago, January 8, 1958.

Grandpa toot around the square on a Sunday afternoon? Well, that's what these boys had under their P-40 hoods." The accident had started him off on his search, I supposed, and again he nodded. It hadn't been an easy journey. Apathy, defeatism—a young enthusiasm will always encounter these. I've done many success interviews, and it's a rare success that has been a joy ride. Dollenberg spent long hours off duty working on the problem of the antiquated spark plug, but when the war ended he still hadn't cracked it. Returning to a young wife and family the colonel organized a non-scheduled commercial airline and operated it for 3 million miles, even introducing gliders for the first time in commercial aviation.

If it hadn't been for some weight-throwing on the part of one of the larger airlines which had begun to smart under the irritating competition it was getting from the Dollenberg outfit, the young man would undoubtedly have succeeded in commercial aviation and this particular story wouldn't have been written. But as it was, Dollenberg was forced out of business on the sort of technicality that somehow seems always to crop out against the small business, not the big. He had to sell.

Well, there he was—with a little money left from the debacle, a family, and a living to make for them. He turned his attention once more to the anachronism of modern engines—the spark plug. Starting again from scratch, he reviewed the problem.

"It's really quite simple," said Col. Dollenberg. "An engine provides power for a vehicle because gasoline, sprayed into the cylinder, is ignited by a spark. When ignited the gasoline burns pushing the piston down into the cylinder. The more complete the burning of the gas the more force in the cylinder. The more force, the more power. Obviously, therefore, the larger the spark the more gas ignited and burned. What we were after was a much larger spark, a big, fat flame!"

"And the conventional spark plug can't provide it?"

"No, it cannot. Every mechanic knows that."

"And the kid in the plane?"

"The P-40? What killed him was insufficient fire—a spark too skinny to ignite sufficient gas to give the engine instant power to climb up and over those trees."

"Why can't the spark plug give a fat spark?" I persisted.

The colonel spoke simply. "Because of its basic design. Every spark plug has an air gap—.025 to .035 of an inch—and the spark is no larger than the gap. No larger did I say? Only when the plugs are brand new is the spark even as large! Carbon forming immediately as the plug is put into use begins fouling, then ruining, the tip. The thin wire electrodes begin to wear away. The danger—and enormous expense—of this obsolete mechanism lies in these factors."

The answer to the spark plug was an igniter which had no airgap—which contained no wire electrodes—whose tip would not foul—which would not blow out even at the highest compressions . . . which would never need a replacement for the life of the motor.

Colonel Dollenberg went to Washington.

The Navy didn't accept him with open arms. The principle—fine! Let's see it work. And Dollenberg made it work. After the most exhaustive tests, he knew he was in. . . . Out went the spark plugs. The LS-702 Prototype was approved for (Continued on next page)

HOW MOTORISTS ARE SAVING \$100 A YEAR

	SPARK PLUGS	LECTRA FUEL IGNITERS	SAVINGS
Cleaning Gapping Replacing	several times a year	never	\$10 per year
Gas Consumption	600 gallons	465 gallons	\$40 per year
Additional cost of premium gas	\$50 a year	not a cent	\$50 per year
		TOTAL SAVINGS	= \$100 per year

U. S. Navy jet engine use; the Air Force followed suit.

If that had been it, it still would have made a good story—the revolutionary change that a former fighter pilot had effected in military aircraft. But that wasn't all. Dollenberg turned to the field of automobiles.

For more than 40 years the old-fashioned spark plug had been the standard gas igniter for every car made. During that time engine power had soared from less than 20 horse to more than 300. Every year the puny spark plug with its skinny little flame became less able to do its job. The new high compression engines were now burning out spark plugs in a few thousand miles of driving. In 1957 Americans paid more than 500 million dollars merely to replace worn-out spark plugs. To provide what spark plugs could not do, the big oil companies began to produce super and then super-super gas—at super prices! Not only were car owners spending a huge sum for plugs each year—they were also spending a fortune in premium gas for the privilege of keeping spark plugs in their engines. And even at that they were not getting their money's worth, as the new cars they bought very soon became sluggish ones.

If ever there was a call for a modern, efficient ignition mechanism to go with the modern automobile, this was it. Dollenberg heard the call. He marketed the LECTRA FUEL IGNITER!

There were problems. Little ones like designing the igniter in the same size and shape as the conventional spark plug they were to replace. And big ones such as getting a small voice heard in the towering wilderness of the Detroit automobile kingdom. Dollenberg was helped by the shrewdness of fleet operators whose business depended upon efficiency and economy. Taxicabs running triple-shift around the clock installed the Fuel Igniter and reported a 10-20% increased gas mileage per car! Truck owners followed suit—and then the motorist. In less than 12 months, sales of the Lectra Fuel Igniter zoomed into the million dollar stratosphere!

I asked Dollenberg about the Lectra advertising claim that had jolted motorists all over the country. "Colonel, you've made the guarantee that LECTRA FUEL IGNITER will save a car owner \$100 a year or that you will take back the igniters and refund their money. How do you arrive at that one hundred dollars figure?"

"It's based on the average of 10,000 miles of driving in one year. First there will be a saving of from \$10 to \$12 a year in eliminating spark-plug cleaning, gapping, and adjusting at 5,000 miles, replacement at 10,000 miles."

"Does that mean that the Fuel Igniter will need no cleaning or replacing for a whole year?"

"It means that the Fuel Igniter will never have to be cleaned or replaced! I

mean that we guarantee that it will outlast the life of any car! Not only that: we are also guaranteeing that the Fuel Igniter will squeeze up to 6—maybe 8—more miles out of every gallon of gas purchased the first year and every year—or we will replace them free until they do. That's a saving of \$40 per year. And it will do this using regular gas—economy gas—not the super gas bought at such walloping prices. That means a saving of \$50 each year. And the igniters will do this every year of the car's life—they improve with age. They never wear out!"

As Dollenberg talked I drew up a chart. You can see it at the top of this page.

I said to Dollenberg, "Colonel, to a person like myself—a guy who drives a car well but knows next to nothing about its mechanism—who's always felt the car runs better after it's had a wash—how will I know right away I've really got something after I've switched from spark plugs to Fuel Igniters?"

The colonel twinkled at me in sympathy. "I've always felt it a pity they don't teach mechanics to all school children. I think I know just how you feel. Anyway—very seriously—please listen to this: The first time you press the starter after you've installed the Igniters (very simple—by the way), you'll hear and feel an instant clean throb of the starter and an immediate even roar of the engine. I tell you, you'll be astonished. Even on the coldest morning you'll get a thrill, listening to your motor kicking over instantly and then settling quickly into a smooth purr. As for stalling in traffic, like that fellow did this afternoon, that won't happen to you. Stalling is almost always traceable to a faulty spark—and the Igniter will not fault. Climbing and passing? Even a big 325 horsepower car can and does falter on a hill or when it tries to pass if suddenly the spark plugs aren't burning sufficient gas. That won't happen to you. Instead you'll climb and pass more swiftly than you've ever known because you'll be burning gas, not wasting it. You've heard about the simple exhaust test? Try it. First, with the spark plugs in place, let the engine idle and stuff a ball of white absorbent cotton into the mouth of the exhaust. It will come out soaking with unused gasoline. Then try it with igniters replacing the plugs. The cotton ball will be almost dry. The gas burned instead of escaping through the exhaust. Or here's something else. Again with spark plugs in the car, go into gear—or in drive if you have an automatic transmission. Don't touch the accelerator. Now note how much the car moves forward—if at all. Then unscrew the plugs and replace the Igniters. If you stood still with spark plugs you'll move forward from 4 to 6 miles an hour with the Igniters while not touching the gas pedal! The gas that was required with spark plugs in your car merely to idle your motor without being able to move it forward, carries you forward up to six miles an hour with Igniters in the engine! One more final thing—with spark plugs a car must be looked over and adjusted several times a year. You know that from your own experience. But can you appreciate the concept of never, never having to remove or change spark plugs because you don't carry any? The concept of Fuel Igniters becoming permanent installations in your engine—for

the life of your engine?

"Yet, with all this—believe it or not—I still haven't fully answered your question. . . . How you'll use more air and less gas . . . the savings on your battery . . . increased RPM . . . how carbon—the enemy of spark plugs—actually increases the efficiency of Fuel Igniters. But what I've tried to say is that the spark plug is as inferior to the Fuel Igniter as the wagon is to the modern automobile. And just as out-dated. Auto mechanics know this now. The ordinary motorist is learning about it fast."

"One last question: What about Detroit, Col. Dollenberg? Do you feel you're fighting a crusade?"

Dollenberg looked out of the window, out into the dusk of the city. There was a reflective quietness about him as he thought of his reply. Then he said: "No, we don't believe we're fighting the big spark plug manufacturers. Oh, there's bound to be a competitive fight soon because it's a matter of only a short time before these giants will all scrap their investments in the obsolete spark plug and turn to the manufacture of fuel igniters. Meanwhile—to put it quite candidly—there is, of course, that huge investment in stocks of spark plugs to liquidate and while the big fellows are attempting to unload, LECTRA will be booming along." The grin came out again as he said: "I hope they take their time about it. At the rate we're going we'll be big enough to take care of our-

selves shortly."

I got up to go, convinced that Dollenberg's quiet confidence was well-founded. The product and the man were right for each other. Here's an incident which impressed me. A short time ago, LECTRA ran a mail order advertisement in the sober New York Times. One of the replies they got was from a gentleman in Pennsylvania who put it to LECTRA right on the line. Said the Pennsylvania man:

"I've read your ad in the New York Times. What I want you to do before I order a set is for you to send me a copy of that ad through the United States mails. Then if your Fuel Igniters won't come through with all those fancy promises—and if you don't send my money back if they don't perform as you say—I'll have Uncle Sam on my side while I go after you." The hard-bitten Pennsylvania man was sent the ad through the mails, all right. And he ordered a set of Fuel Igniters. LECTRA wasn't fearful that Uncle Sam would be after them. Because—and here was the kicker—Uncle Sam a LECTRA customer! A large U. S. Government agency, after field-testing 5,000 Fuel Igniters ordered 25,000 to replace every spark plug in a fleet of 3,000 key vehicles!

So that's the story of The Big Fat Flame. I'm leaving a little space for a message from Col. Dollenberg. Meanwhile I'm on my way outside to the garage with my set of Fuel Igniters. I can't wait to get rid of those spark plugs!

This article has been presented both as an advertisement for the Lectra Fuel Igniter and as a public service. Especially do I wish to emphasize the words public service. It is flattering to be imitated, it is said, but since the invention of the Lectra Fuel Igniter, there have appeared so-called "imitations" which have failed to perform as promised.

We state, flatly and sincerely, that we can back every claim that appears in Mr. Mayer's story. Please look very carefully at the table which follows. It has been prepared from the research of one of the nation's leading Consumer Surveys:

RECORD OF PERFORMANCE—LECTRA FUEL IGNITERS

NOTE—All Lectra-equipped cars in these tests used REGULAR GAS

(Compiled from Consumer Reports and Field Tests)

YEAR	Make of Car	Spark Plug Miles Per Gallon	Lectra Fuel Igniters Miles Per Gallon	Miles Increase	(Gain) Extra Miles Per Gallon
1956	Chevrolet V8	17.7	22.2	24%	4.5
1955	Nash Rambler	20.0	27.6	38%	7.6
1954	Plymouth 6	22.2	26.0	17%	3.8
1955	Ford Fairlane	14.0	21.2	50%	7.2
1957	Chrysler Windsor	16.5	21.0	20%	3.5
1954	Oldsmobile 98	15.5	18.0	14%	2.5
1957	Dodge D-500	16.0	21.5	35%	5.5
1951	Buick Super	13.0	17.0	22%	4.0
1956	Plymouth V-8	16.0	20.0	25%	4.0
1955	Oldsmobile 98 (air-conditioned)	15.0	20.9	40%	6.0

All above figures confirmed by letters and reports available from our files in New York City.

Nothing is as exacting—as compromising—as cold statistics. In the final analysis, nothing will prove to you the extraordinary benefits of the Lectra Fuel Igniter as its performance in your own automobile.

Therefore we guarantee (and stake our reputation and our business on this guarantee):

That Lectra Fuel Igniters must be everything we say they are, everything we have led you to expect. They must make your car perform as you never thought it would and on regular gas. You must IN YOUR OWN JUDGMENT get easier starting, faster pick-up, improved economy (to conform to the table above) or you can return them after a 10-day trial and get back every cent you paid—without question and without delay. What's more—they must continue to function properly for the life of your car or they will be replaced until they do.

We've taken a lot of your time in presenting our story. Now there's nothing else to say; the rest is up to our Fuel Igniter. If you want to try them (bear in mind our guarantee) they will be rushed to you as soon as we receive your order. For your convenience we are adding a coupon to the bottom of this page. If you'll fill it out and mail it I can promise you the most exciting automobile experience you've ever known.

Sincerely,

Lucas P. Dollenberg

Lectra Fuel Igniter Co., Dept. GK-47
11 East 47 Street, New York 17, N. Y.

Rush my Lectra Fuel Igniters by return mail on your money-back guarantee.

- ☐ I enclose \$12.60 for 6 Igniters
☐ I enclose \$16.80 for 8 Igniters
☐ I enclose \$_____ for _____ Igniters at \$2.10 each
☐ Send _____ Igniters C.O.D. I enclose \$1 deposit and will pay postman balance on delivery plus shipping charges.

My car is _____ year _____ make _____ model _____ no. of cylinders _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ Zone _____ State _____



MASK OF THE RAIDER

(Continued from page 37)

buried under tons of lumber, lay a sturdy auxiliary engine and an impressive arsenal of naval armament to help her carry out her ticklish mission.

Another order by the captain sent the cumbersome lumber overboard, saw the engine unlimbered, and the cannon mounted in their assigned places behind a phoney facade which, even upon close inspection, would have passed for an innocent cabin. Under equally innocent canvas covers, loaded machine guns and smaller cannon awaited expert hands. The captain's poor, suffering wife, rid of her encumbering skirts and bonnet, had become a youthful gunnery officer. Now the devil looked about his remade vessel and chuckled gleefully. Pipe still in mouth, he then removed his oiled-skin cap, replacing it with the handsome, snap-brimmed cap of an officer of the Imperial German Navy. "By Joe!" he muttered to himself in English, "*Der Seeadler is ready.*"

The Sea Eagle was ready, all right. Under full sail now, she headed south and cruised along the waters of South America, looking for trouble and adventure. She might be a thing out of another age, slow, unarmored and undergunned compared to the iron ships she would hunt and fight with, but on her decks stood a crew of crack volunteers. And at her helm was Count Von Luckner, the *Sea Devil*—actor, trickster, and strategist who laughed at odds and convention—the last of the sail-borne buccaners.

Born Count Felix Graf Von Luckner, in Dresden, Germany, May 31, 1881, the skipper of *Der Seeadler* boasted of a background which fitted him perfectly for the job of commanding one of Germany's elusive surface raiders. Describing himself as "a poor student," and unable to stomach the staid routine of German aristocracy and his father's castle, young Felix, aged 13, ran off one day to "ship before the mast" as an ordinary sailor. After several harrowing experiences (one of which was falling overboard and luckily managing to catch a giant albatross by the legs, thus keeping himself afloat until rescued by his ship's lifeboat), Felix deserted at Fremantle, Australia, and joined the Salvation Army. He became an assistant lighthouse-tender and when he was caught smooching the lighthouse-keeper's daughter, thought it wise to take off.

His next job was no less illuminating and a great deal safer. He traveled the full length and breadth of Australia with a troop of Hindu fakirs, assisting them with their bags of tricks, a job for which he demonstrated great talent and relish. Next he became what was then probably the only dishwashing count in the world, and after a succession of equally improbable jobs he shipped out once more. In Mexico, copping a trick from his Hindu friends, he repeated his disappearing act to reappear, shortly after, in the Mexican army. But apparently the brewing revolution there soon grew dull, for not much later the restless German had a deck under him again. The ship, however, became involved in a sea-collision, and Von Luckner—not so lucky this time—emerged from it gravely injured.

His recovery was soon enhanced by the balmy Honolulu climate. There, too, this two-fisted, rough-talking nobleman-sailor

found himself right at home exchanging drinks and bloody noses with waterfront types from all over the world. And there too something prompted him to return to his own land—and perhaps find his proper place in life.

So it was that the year 1911 found the tough ex-seaman an officer in the German merchant marine, plying his hard-won seamanship with the Hamburg-American line. By now he had mastered all the necessary requirements for commanding a ship. Aside from that, his friends came from higher brackets: the influential, the rich, the aristocracy—even the old Kaiser, himself, came to know the big-voiced, steel-fisted young nobleman who now said "By Joe!" to cover a multitude of former and more colorful words, when he was either very happy or very angry. It was at this stage in his life that war broke out between Germany and the Allies.

Little is recorded about Count Von Luckner during the initial years of the war, save that his transfer from the merchant marine to the Imperial German Navy was greeted with enthusiasm by no less personage than Kaiser Wilhelm, himself. Somewhere along the line the young adventurer conceived the idea of the most perfectly disguised surface raider of all time. He presented it to someone high in the Germany Navy, where it received official approval in 1916, when the ancient *Pass of Balmaha*, renamed the *Sea Eagle*, was assigned the mission of sweeping British merchant ships off the seas. It really was quite a beautiful and original plan. German surface raiders were, as a rule, fast, well-equipped steam-driven vessels, converted for the job by installing batteries of 3 to 5.9 inch guns, plus whatever armor-plating it was deemed feasible. Who, then, would ever suspect a sail-driven, leaky old scow like the *Seeadler*? The trick, of course, would be to break through the tight, efficient British blockade which barred such ships from the South Atlantic and Pacific waters—those very lush hunting grounds. The change of identity, the personal disguises, the seemingly pitiful conditions aboard—all were ingenious products of a very special and tricky brain.

As the *Seeadler* proceeded along the eastern coast of South America, in search of fair game, her master stood to the helm musing on their recent departure from the homeland. The old Kaiser, himself, had been there to wish them a successful voyage. It had been he who had said: "May the hand of the Almighty be at your helm!" Von Luckner would soon have reason to recall those words again. From above the alarmed cry of his lookout. Ahead, just within sight, loomed the massive shape of a British auxiliary cruiser making for them. Lightly armed merchantmen they could, and would, fight, but tangling with this arch-enemy of the raiders would be like a cobra taking on a mongoose. The trip, so young, so painstakingly prepared, seemed about to end.

Crowding all sail possible, and praying for a strong wind, Von Luckner manned his few guns and began a desperate race for life. For hours they tried to escape, but always, relentlessly, the more powerful British warship managed to close a little more. The German sailors knew that had it not been for the skipper's superb seamanship, they would have been at the bottom of the sea hours before; still, they could not escape forever. The crew stood to their guns, prepared to die without ever having tasted a single victory. Then, quite suddenly—a miracle! Just ahead of them was a thick, soupy, beautiful rain squall!

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"It was the hand of God!" Von Luckner said years later.

Within minutes the *Seeadler* was completely enshrouded in the friendly deluge—lost forever to her pursuer.

One morning, shortly after, a British merchantman, heavily loaded with goods from Pacific waters and on her way home from an easy voyage around the Horn, came upon a terrifying sight. Just a few miles off her starboard stood a huge square-rigged vessel, her dirty sails flapping idly in the fair breeze, and from the ship's bowels came a foul, greasy mass of smoke which clearly showed her hull to be on fire. The crew on the windjammer ran about her dirty decks in a panicky, completely uncontrolled fashion, while an hysterical woman could be seen waving her arms and screaming for help. It was a most horrible sight at sea, and the brave British captain immediately decided to go to the rescue of the Norwegian ship (that was the flag she flew). Accordingly, he snapped orders to put about, and within minutes was scant yards away from the burning ship, his engines all astern. Then a fantastic thing happened before his uncomprehending eyes: The old ship's crew suddenly disappeared, her flag went down and the fire went out. The Imperial German flag materialized at her mast, as if by sheer magic. The large cabin collapsed on oiled hinges, revealing the swinging barrels of loaded cannon. Even as the British captain stood there, open-mouthed, the guns were brought to bear on his bow, his waterline, and directly at his command bridge—at the orders of the "frightened woman," who now stood calmly peeling off "her" skirt to reveal the smart uniform of an officer in the German Navy. What the redfaced British sea-dog said cannot be repeated here.

Ten minutes later his ship and her valuable cargo were at the bottom of the South Atlantic. Much to his surprise—he and his men were not. Instead he was placed in what the hospitable and charming German commander of this amazing

raider called his "Skippers' Club"—a handsomely furnished cabin within the *Seeadler* which was destined for much distinguished company in months to come. The British seamen were entertained, as much as the precautions of war permitted, by the German crew.

Over a welcome drink, the British captain learned some amazing things about Count Von Luckner, who loved to boast: "I always get along with rough fellows, working men, and sailors." Although this born gentleman enjoyed telling about his waterfront and barroom brawls in which he exchanged bruises and bloody heads with those same "rough fellows," he could not bear to take a human life! Not even in war!

"But my dear fellow!" said the astonished Englishman. "How can you possibly avoid it in your business?"

"I shall avoid it," said the German smiling, "if I have to resort to every trick in my bag! And I've a lot of them!"

True to his word, he did. Before his course had carried him clear to the Horn, six captains had shared his "Skippers' Club," six ships had gone to the bottom with much-needed British supplies, and six entire British crews had been safely landed on some neutral point along the South American shore-line to find their ways back safely to their ports.

Evading the constant and aggressive vigilance of the British Navy, the *Sea Devil* and his incredible ship made their way past Tierra del Fuego, around Cape Horn, and into the warm waters of the South Pacific, where hunting proved to be even better. By now the *Sea Eagle's* crew had grown so proficient and daring that there was seldom a miss. Wooden ships or steamers—whatever came along—were tricked and bagged, rarely firing a shot. Von Luckner, willing to risk his ship, rather than kill, resorted to every device at his command: stealth and surprise, the neutral flag, open chase, and the beautifully-acted distress scene—the last of these being his most effective.

Coming in the November Issue of the NEW MAN'S CONQUEST



On sale Sept. 17th
more pages, more features, more true action adventure

Sentenced to 10 years at hard labor on Devil's Island, Robert Moulin was doomed to a living hell. Tortured by sadistic guards, Moulin knew there were only three ways to escape from the infamous concentration camp: the killing jungle, the sea of man-eating sharks—or with the help of THE 700 WILLING WIVES OF DEVIL'S ISLAND.

From the secret archives of the Pentagon comes the saga of the U.S. Navy's "sampan" fleet and its private war against the Japs during the dark days following Pearl Harbor. For the most fantastic anti-submarine operation of World War II, in which five sea-going guerrillas decoyed, boarded and captured a Jap sub, read UNSUNG RAMPAGE OF THE BAMBOO BATTLESHIP.

On June 11, 1930, almost 30 years before globe-girdling jet flights, two dare-devil pilots took off from Chicago Airport in an old Wright J-6—and never landed again until 24 days later. John and Kenneth Hunter's record flight has yet to be surpassed—and even today Air Force scientists study their ordeal as a "landmark on the road to space." BROTHERS TO EAGLES.

STARTING TO GET BALD?

take hope

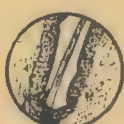
for new hair with the Brandenfels Home System!

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MICROSCOPE SHOWS MIRACLE OF HAIR REGROWTH

1. Cross section from one scalp in a test group, made before the use of the Brandenfels System. Doctors said: The follicle is small (and "resting"), the opening is plugged with sebaceous gum (dandruff scale) and scaly skin layers; no hair evident.

2. Typical cross-section made from scalp of a successful Brandenfels user, a few weeks after following instructions. Now the doctors' comments were: the follicle has increased in size, the opening is no longer plugged and a tiny hair is in evidence.

3. Now, with hair regrown, this microscopic enlargement of a cross-section was made. The doctors said: the follicle has increased in size, the plug in the opening has disappeared and the hair shaft in the follicle is proof of new production.

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References: St. Helens Bank, U. S. National Bank, Chamber of Commerce—all St. Helens, Oregon



1 Al Leifson, grocer, was one of the group participating in the medical research from which came the microscopic enlargements of follicles "before" and "after", shown at the left.

2 "Only those who have lost their hair can know what a thrill it is to have hair again. Mine has filled in where it was sparse for 8 years," says this Seattle man.

3 Would you believe a man over 60 years of age and bald for more than 20 years could ever regrow hair? Here's proof that he did—with the Brandenfels Home Plan.

4 This young man was completely bald but these two pictures show what he accomplished in 24 weeks with the Brandenfels System, and the full head of hair he finally achieved.

5 Where follicles (roots) were still alive this man was able to achieve a very considerable hair regrowth with the Brandenfels Home System—as these pictures show.

6 Doctors who were skeptical that this little girl would regain her hair now shake their heads in wonderment at dramatic results following use of the Brandenfels Plan.

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According to the *Official British History of the War*, only one instance can be found of a death attributed to Von Luckner's raiding activities. Even then, it seems to have been almost accidental—if such can be said of combat at sea. It was during the chase of the *Horngrath*, a British ship which the crafty count had managed to lure within range with his ship-affrepanicky-woman routine.

The act worked, all right, but only up to a point. Perhaps the *Horngrath's* skipper had heard of the cunning count, or maybe he was a naturally cautious man, at any rate he approached just close enough to surmise that if he got any closer it would be *his* ship—not the *Seedler* which would be in need of help.

Now followed an old fashioned sea-chase, more exciting than any fiction writer's imagination could ever conceive. With the canny captain of the *Horngrath* running and maneuvering for all he was worth, the *Seedler* set out in hot pursuit, firing her guns to disable or stop the fleeing vessel. It was a rich prize and the old Sea Devil had no intention of letting it escape. Nor did she. The raider's accurate fire and her determined skipper's expert seamanship soon convinced the Britisher that capture was inevitable. Thus the *Horngrath* gave up her fight—but, unfortunately not before blood had been shed. A crewman had been killed by one of the German shell bursts. This was the only mark on an incredibly bloodless war-time record.

But Von Luckner and his *Seedler* had become hot. They were too good, too costly to the furious British. The word went out: *Get the Sea Devil! Stop Von Luckner!* By August, 1917, just a little more than a year since the start of her amazing career, the tough, old tub's sealuck was rapidly coming to an end. Everywhere the British were hunting her with well-equipped steamships and war vessels, any of which were more than a match for the square-rigger in armament and speed. All of the Sea Devil's crew, including her captain, knew that from the very start they had been running on luck and borrowed time. In those months of hide-and-seek, they had managed to send to the bottom 16 British merchant ships. Many of them the *Seedler's* superiors in tonnage, speed and armament! A truly amazing record, considering that the *Atlantis* (most famous and successful of all WWII raiders), a heavily armed conventional ship, was to hang up the all-time record of 22 ships in 21 months of continuous operations—only six more kills in twice the time at sea!

But the old *Seedler's* death was on the calendar. Her end came one evening, when, after having taken refuge in a cove off the atoll of Mopelia, in the Society Islands, a sudden, freak tidal wave rushed the venerable old tub, doing in minutes what the entire British Navy had failed to do in a year. Before her crew could start her motor, *Seedler* had been swept up and smashed upon a jagged coral reef. The raider was dead. Her crew virtual prisoners on an island at which the British might call any day.

But the plucky and unpredictable Von Luckner still refused to admit defeat. With five others he set sail in a lifeboat in a desperate attempt to reach the nearest German possession (many of the islands later held by Japan in WWII were then German). On September 2, 1917, having evaded capture, the six adventurers touched the Cook Islands, picked up what supplies they could (mostly fruits), then struck out again.

Now follows one of the most controversial phases of the amazing Von Luckner's life. According to him, on or about September 14th, scurvy broke out aboard his little craft. Said he: "The blood turns to water, first in the legs, then upward. When it reaches the heart you die. Where the blood is water the flesh is white, and you can see the line of the white creep slowly up . . ." They were, he recalls, on the point of death.

Some of his critics, however, give a big horselaugh to the count's version of death by scurvy. Says one: "Scurvy doesn't attack men who have recently eaten fresh fruit. Also, in scurvy blood turns dark and fluid and the flesh red and bruised . . ."

To this author, who claims no great medical knowledge, it appears more probable that the count and his men were suffering from what might have been some form of "trench-foot." But who knows?

Approaching the Island of Wakaya, death again reached for the elusive count and his men. A pounding surf which they could not escape, threatened to smash them against a sharp coral reef, sending them to the same watery grave that had enveloped their faithful *Seedler*. Drawing their pistols, the men resolved to commit suicide, rather than suffer further (so recorded the count), but at the last moment their boat was carried safely over the reef and into the smooth lagoon. But still they were not in the clear.

Suddenly a group of armed men was seen heading for them. The count found himself torn between a desire to fight to the end, and a more powerful distaste for going "against the unwritten laws of the game." Later he recalled: " . . . if we fought in citizen's clothes, we were nothing more than international bandits and as such almost sure to hang finally from a yard-arm." Thus, he asserts, his only course was to trick his captors by dropping all weapons overboard, which he managed in plain sight of the advancing men.

Mr. H. C. Hills, then Superintendent of the Native Constabulary at Levuka, Fiji Islands, who was one of the armed band that ran to capture Von Luckner disputes this version bitterly. He states: "Von Luckner says the weapons were dumped overboard in my presence. This is a deliberate lie. The weapons are in the Fiji Defence Club at Suva, and may be seen there any day." He further states that Von Luckner and his crew wore uniforms of a khaki naval pattern, and made no pretense of being civilians. Furthermore, he asserts, the capture of the famous raider was effected by himself with only the help of a dozen Fiji policemen and an unloaded revolver. Neither did he seem happy about Von Luckner's statement that he (Hills) was "bewildered, frightened and certainly non-plussed . . ."

Following their capture, Von Luckner and his men were sent to a Prisoner-of-War camp in New Zealand, from which the indomitable Sea Devil managed to escape. He was recaptured, however, and there sat out the remainder of the war.

Those left behind near the *Seedler's* grave, finally escaped their island-prison and sailed a tiny sloop to Easter Island, a Chilean possession, where they were interned until the armistice. Then they, and their captain, were set free to receive the praises—not only of their countrymen, but of their former enemies, as well—which they had so superbly earned. The *Seedler's* cruise, like those of the *Bounty*, the *Golden Hind*, the *Victory* and the first iron-clad, the *Monitor*, now belonged to naval history—and to the world! END

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- LEADERSHIP**
 - ☐ Industrial Foremanship
 - ☐ Industrial Supervision
 - ☐ Personnel-Labor Relations
 - ☐ Supervision
- MECHANICAL and SHOP**
 - ☐ Diesel Engines
 - ☐ Gas-Elec. Welding
 - ☐ Industrial Engineering
 - ☐ Industrial Instrumentation
 - ☐ Industrial Metallurgy
 - ☐ Industrial Safety
 - ☐ Machine Shop Practice
 - ☐ Mechanical Engineering
 - ☐ Professional Engineer (Mech)
 - ☐ Quality Control
 - ☐ Reading Shop Blueprints
 - ☐ Refrigeration and Air Conditioning
 - ☐ Tool Design
 - ☐ Tool Making
- RADIO, TELEVISION**
 - ☐ General Electronics Tech.

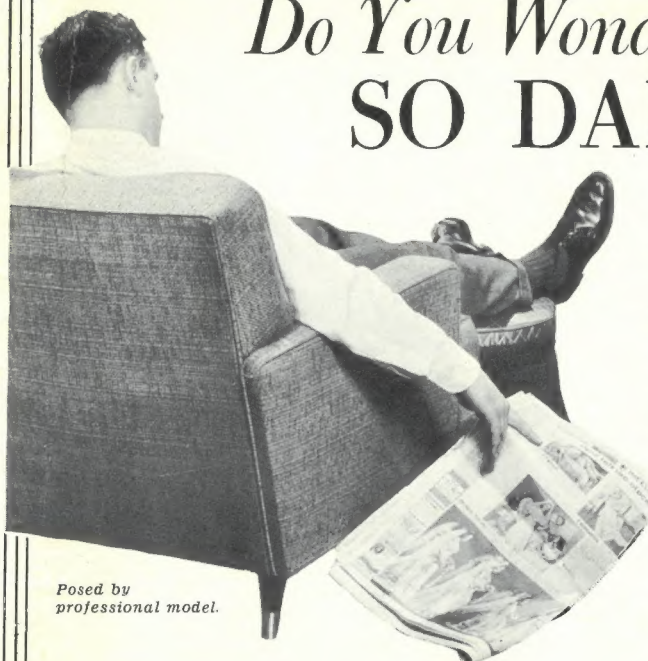
- ☐ Industrial Electronics
- ☐ Practical Radio-TV Engr'g
- ☐ Practical Telephony
- ☐ Radio-TV Servicing
- RAILROAD**
 - ☐ Car Inspector and Air Brake
 - ☐ Diesel Electrician
 - ☐ Diesel Engr. and Fireman
 - ☐ Diesel Locomotive
- STEAM and DIESEL POWER**
 - ☐ Combustion Engineering
 - ☐ Power Plant Engineer
 - ☐ Stationary Diesel Engr.
 - ☐ Stationary Fireman
- TEXTILE**
 - ☐ Carding and Spinning
 - ☐ Cotton Manufacture
 - ☐ Cotton Warming and Weaving
 - ☐ Loom Fixing Technician
 - ☐ Textile Designing
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As if being tired at night wasn't bad enough, I found myself getting upset by almost everything. I was "touchy" in the office, cross and irritable with my own children. I'd start arguments with my wife over the smallest things. I finally realized that something had to be done — so I went to see our family doctor.

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Inositol	15 mg.	Vitamin B ₂	2.5 mg.	Cobalt	0.04 mg.
di-Methionine	10 mg.	Vitamin B ₆	0.5 mg.	Copper	0.45 mg.
Glutamic Acid	50 mg.	Vitamin B ₁₂	2 mcg.	Manganese	0.5 mg.
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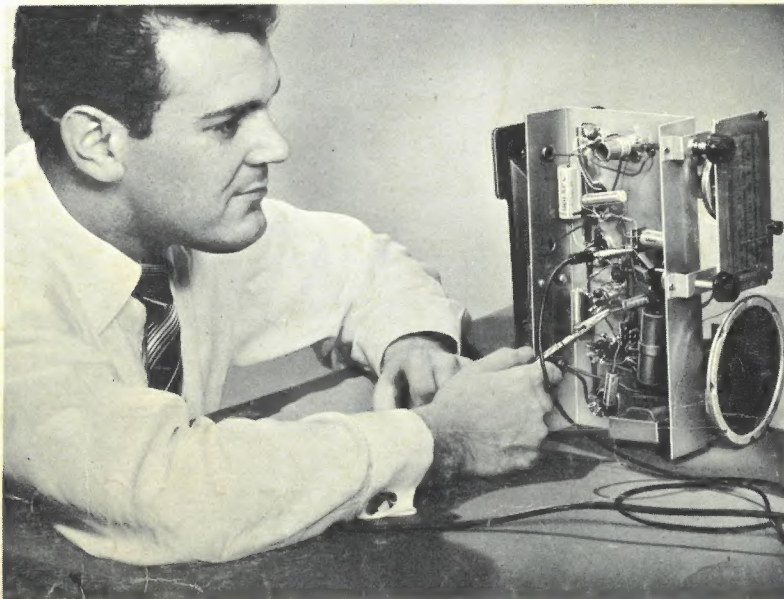
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